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漫画人

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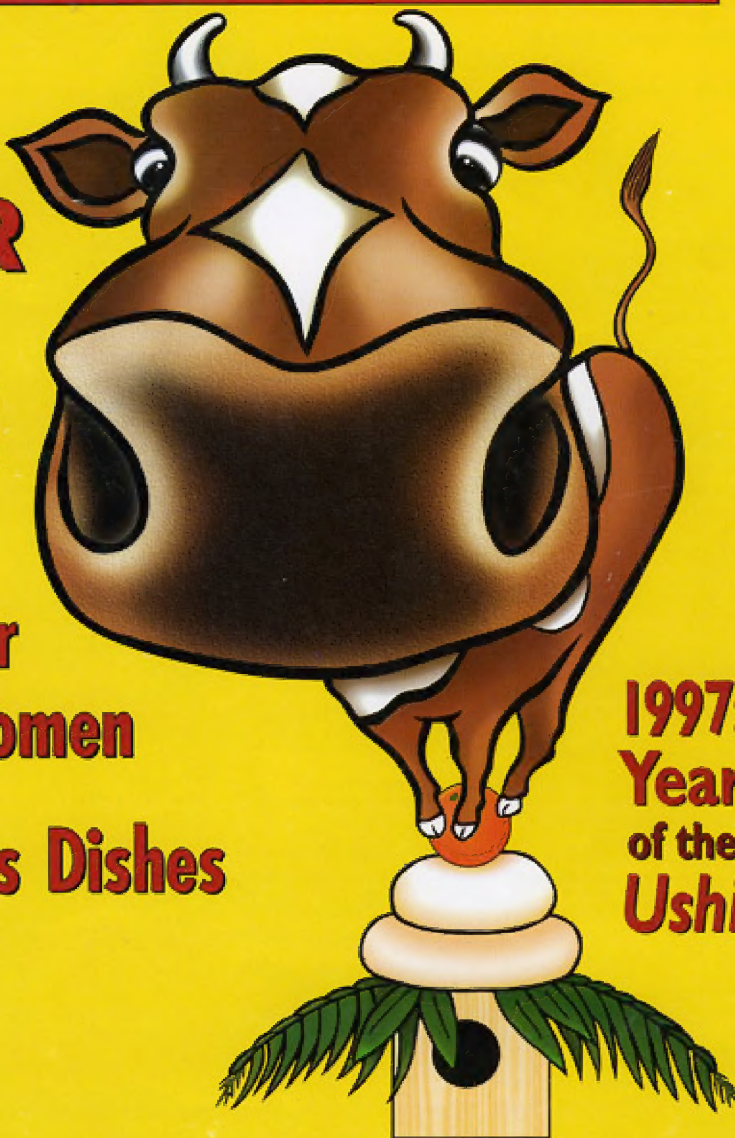
No. 62

**HUMOR
in
JAPAN**

**Manga for
Career Women**

New Year's Dishes

**1997:
Year
of the
Ushi**



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After Zero

by 岡崎次郎 / Okazaki Jirō

— The Devil's Seeds, Part 2 —

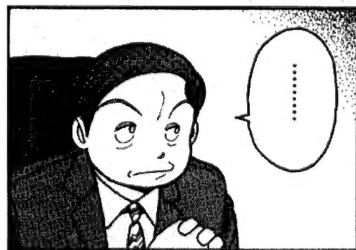
Subtract the dark, Cold War Era edge from the *Twilight Zone*, add a '90s Japanese backdrop—plus too much Kool-Aid before bedtime—and you have a typical short manga “episode” of Okazaki Jirō’s *After Zero*. Like any bizarre dream, the plotlines are often less than watertight, but distinctive artwork and fantastic stories make *After Zero* a timeless classic. Debuting in 1990 in the weekly magazine *Big Comic*, the *After Zero* stories are now published as independent volumes of collected shorts by Shogakukan. “The Devil’s Seeds” is the fourth *After Zero* episode to appear in *Mangajin* (issues 22, 30-32, 41-43).

Umezawa is a greedy man with big ideas. His key to fame and fortune lies in an ancient seed recently unearthed in an archeological expedition. Legend has it that the seed produces a robust grain that can grow in any soil. Unfortunately, Umezawa lacks the brains to unlock the seed’s potential.

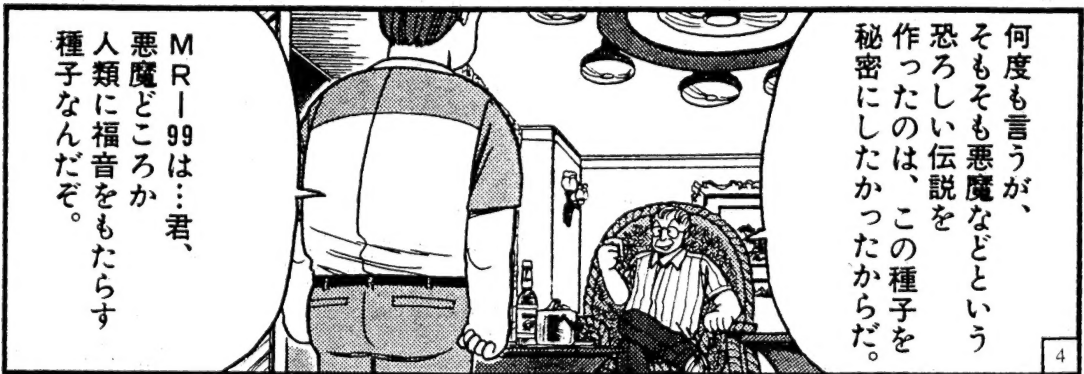
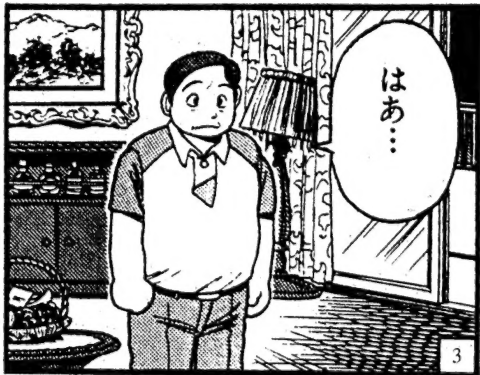


At first, he tries to exploit the genius of an idealistic young biochemist, **Kōnoue**. Already wary of the seeds’ purported curse, Kōnoue is turned off by Umezawa’s self-serving scheme.

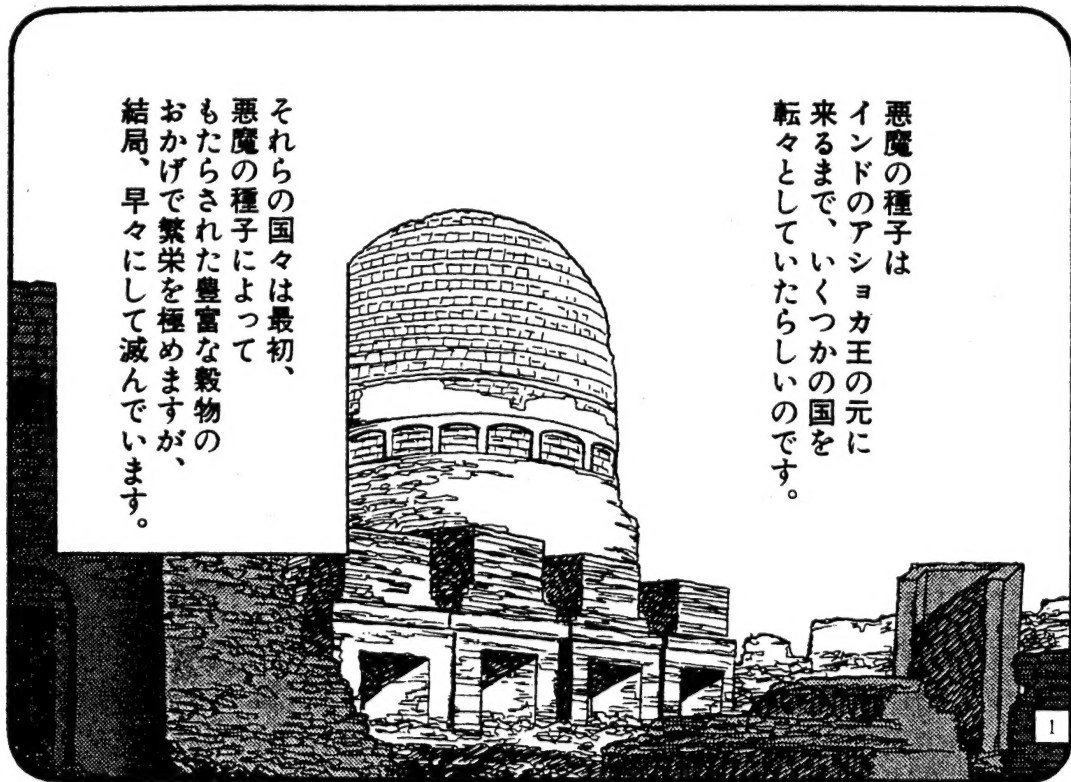
Almost 20 years later, Umezawa is the president of a large chemical company. He has finally found the genius who can make his dream a reality: the young and lovely **Dr. Kamimura**.



The broody **Kuze**, high-level executive and moral conscience of the chemical company, steps aside to allow Dr. Kamimura to head the company’s most important project: cultivating the miracle seeds they call MR-99.



- 1 **Kuze:** 社長、少し 気になる ことが...
Shachō, sukoshi ki ni naru koto ga...
 co. pres. a little bothers me thing (subj.)
"Sir, there's something that still bothers me a little."
 (PL3 implied)
- *ki ni naru* is an expression for "[something] bothers me/is a sticking point/weights on [my] mind," and here the expression modifies *koto* ("thing") → *ki ni naru koto* = "something that bothers me."
- 2 **Umezawa:** また 伝説 の 話 か ね、 久世君?
Mata densetsu no hanashi ka ne, Kuze-kun?
 again legend of talk (?) (colloq.) (name-fam.)
"Is this again talk about that legend, Mr. Kuze?"
"Are you talking about that legend again, Mr. Kuze?" (PL2)
- *hanashi* is a noun for "talk/talking," so *densetsu no hanashi* = "talk of/about the legend."
 • *-kun* is a more familiar equivalent of *-san* ("Mr./Ms."), used mainly with male peers or subordinates (in a corporate setting superiors use it with subordinates of both sexes).
 • asking a question with *ka ne* is mostly reserved for superiors speaking to subordinates.
- 3 **Kuze:** はあ...
Hā...
 yes
"Well, yes..." (PL3)
- *hā* is a very tentative/uncertain *hai* ("yes").
- 4 **Umezawa:** 何度も 言うが、そもそも 悪魔 など という 恐ろしい 伝説 を 作った の は、
Nando mo iu ga, somo-somo akuma nado to iu osoroshii densetsu o tsukutta no wa,
 repeatedly say but to begin with devil things like (quote) say/speak scary legend (obj.) made (nom.) as for
 この 種子 を 秘密 に したかった から だ。
kono shushi o himitsu ni shitakatta kara da.
 these seeds (obj.) secret into wanted to make because is
"I've said this before, but the reason they created the scary legend of the Devil's Seeds in the first place was because they wanted to keep these seeds a secret." (PL2)
- Umezawa:** MR-99 は、君、悪魔 どころか、人類 に 福音 を もたらす 種子 なんだ ぞ。
Emu-āru kyūjūkyū wa, kimi, akuma dokoroka, jinrui ni fukuin o motarasu shushi na n da zo.
 (seed variety) as for you devil far from humanity to good news (obj.) bring seed (is-explan.) (emph.)
"Far from having anything to do with the devil, MR-99 is a seed that will bring good news to all humanity." (PL2)
- *nando* = "how many times"; *nando mo* = "over and over/repeatedly/time after time." *Nando mo iu* literally means "I say this over and over" → "I've said this before."
 • *akuma nado to iu* (lit., "[it] speaks of things like the devil") and *osoroshii* ("fearsome/scary") both modify *densetsu* ("legend"): "the scary legend that speaks of things like the devil" → "the scary legend about them being the devil's seeds."
 • *tsukutta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *tsukuru* ("make/fabricate").
 • *no* is a nominalizer that turns the complete thought/sentence *akuma nado to iu osoroshii densetsu o tsukutta* into a noun, and *wa* marks that noun as the topic: "as for the making up of the scary legend about..."
 • *shitakatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *shitai*, the "want to" form of *suru* ("do/make"); ~ *ni suru* is an expression for "make [something] into [something]," so *shushi o himitsu ni shitakatta* = "wanted to make the seeds into a secret" → "wanted to keep the seeds a secret."
 • the X *dokoro ka* Y pattern is equivalent to expressions like "far from X, Y," "far from X, not even Y" or "not even Y, much less X." *Akuma dokoro ka* is literally "far from the devil," implying "far from having anything to do with the devil."
 • *fukuin* is also the word used to refer to "the (Christian) gospel," but here it's being used more generically to mean "good news/glad tidings."
 • *jinrui ni fukuin o motarasu* is a complete thought/sentence ("it brings good news to humanity") modifying *shushi* ("seed").
- 5 **Umezawa:** もっとも、その 福音 を 与える の は この 私 なんだ が ね。
Mottomo, sono fukuin o ataeru no wa kono watashi na n da ga ne.
 of course that good news (obj.) give/bestow one as for this I/me (is-explan.) but (colloq.)
"Of course, the one who will give them the good news is me." (PL2)
- *no* after *ataeru* is like the pronoun "one," and *sono fukuin o ataeru* modifies it: "the one who will give them that good news."
- 6 **Kuze:** 実は、K大 の 考古学 研究室 の 先生 に 話を伺った んです。
Jitsu wa, Kē-dai no Kōkogaku Kenkyū-shitsu no sensei ni hanashi o ukagatta n desu.
 actually K Univ.'s archeology dept. off/in teacher/professor (target) spoke with (explan.)
"Actually, I spoke with a professor in the Archeology Department at K University." (PL3)
- *kenkyū* refers to scientific or academic research, and *-shitsu* designates a "room/office," so *kenkyū-shitsu* literally means "research room/office." As a generic term, it can refer simply to a college professor's personal office, or in the sciences, his lab; but when preceded by the name of a discipline or specialization, it can refer to various-sized sub-units within a department.
 • *hanashi* = "story/account/talk/remarks," and *ukagatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *ukagau* ("ask" or "hear/be told," depending on the context); *hanashi o ukagau* is an expression that implies asking someone for an account/remarks/explanation and then listening to what he has to say, so it's often equivalent to "speak with [someone]."



1

Kuze: 悪魔の種子はインドのアシカ王の元に来るまで、
Akuma no Shushi wa Indo no Ashoka-ō no moto ni kuru made,
 devil 's seeds as for India of King Asoka 's court/realm to come until/before
 いくつかの国を転々としていたらしいのです。
ikutsuka no kuni o tenten to shite ita rashii no desu.
 several countries (obj.) had moved from place to place apparently (explan.)

"In the time before they came to King Asoka's realm in India, the Devil's Seeds apparently had travelled through a number of other countries." (PL3)

Kuze: それらの国々は最初、悪魔の種子によってもたらされた豊富な穀物のおかげで
Sore-ra no kuniguni wa saisho, Akuma no Shushi ni yotte motarasareta hōfu na kokumotsu no okage de
 those countries as for at first devil 's seeds by was brought bountiful grain thanks to
 繁栄を極めますが、結局、早々にして滅んでいます。
han'ei o kiwamemasu ga, kekkyoku, sōsō ni shite horonde imasu.
 prosperity (obj.) maximize but ultimately quickly/without delay fall to ruin

"Thanks to the bountiful harvests brought about by the Devil's Seeds, those countries at first attained unprecedented prosperity, but then they quickly fell to ruin." (PL3)

- -ō denotes a king, and Ashoka-ō = "King Asoka," one of the greatest rulers of ancient India, who reigned from around 273-232 BCE and unified most of the country for the first time.
- ~ no moto after a person's name refers to a place (physical or abstract) near/beside/under the influence of that person: *Ashoka-ō no moto ni kuru* = "come to King Asoka's court/realm."
- made after a verb means "until" that action takes place; when the following clause describes another action, it implies the second action takes place/took place in the time leading up to the first action.
- tenten describes movement from one locale/residence/job to another, often with a feeling of haphazardness. The word is used to modify various words that imply movement, but its most common appearance is probably in the more generic *tenten to suru* seen here (*shite ita* is the past form of *shite iru*, from *suru*, "do"), which implies "move about here and there."
- rashii implies an element of inference or indirect knowledge ("apparently/it seems/I guess")—used here because he is reporting what the professor told him.
- motarasareta is the plain/abrupt past form of *motarasareru*, passive form of *motarasu* ("bring/bring about"). *Akuma no shushi ni yotte motarasareta* is a complete thought/sentence ("[they] were brought about by the Devil's Seeds") modifying *hōfu na kokumotsu* ("bountiful grain" → "bountiful harvests").
- ~ no okage de means "owing to/thanks to/as a result of ~." It can be used either for giving credit or assigning blame.
- kiwamemasu is the polite form of *kiwameru* ("take to an extreme/maximize").
- sōsō ni shite = sōsō ni = "quickly/promptly/without delay."
- horonde imasu is the polite form of *horonde iru*, from *horobiru* ("[nation/ruler/race] falls to ruin/is overthrown").

2

Umezawa: 君、わざわざそんなことを調べたのか?
Kimi, wazawaza sonna koto o shirabeta no ka?
 you specially that kind of thing (obj.) investigated/inquired into (explan.-?)
"You went to the trouble of finding out all that?" (PL2)

- wazawaza implies the action required special/deliberate effort: "go/went to the trouble of [doing the action]."
- shirabeta is the plain/abrupt past form of *shiraberu* ("investigate/study/look into/inquire about").

3

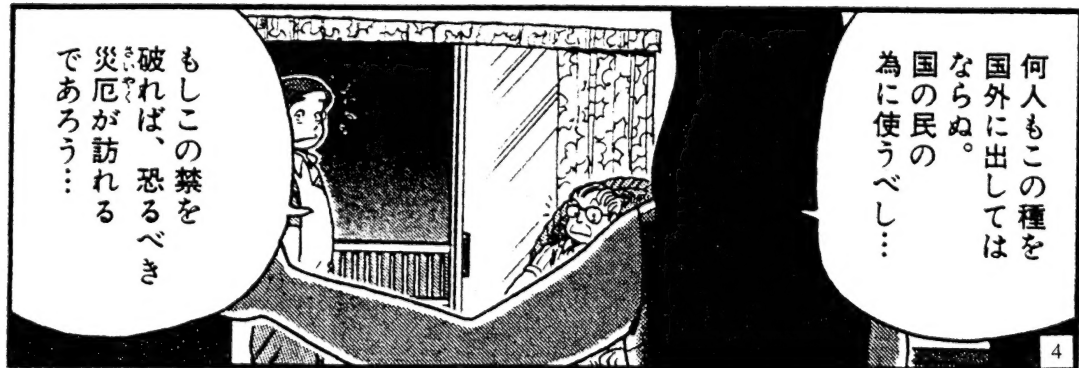
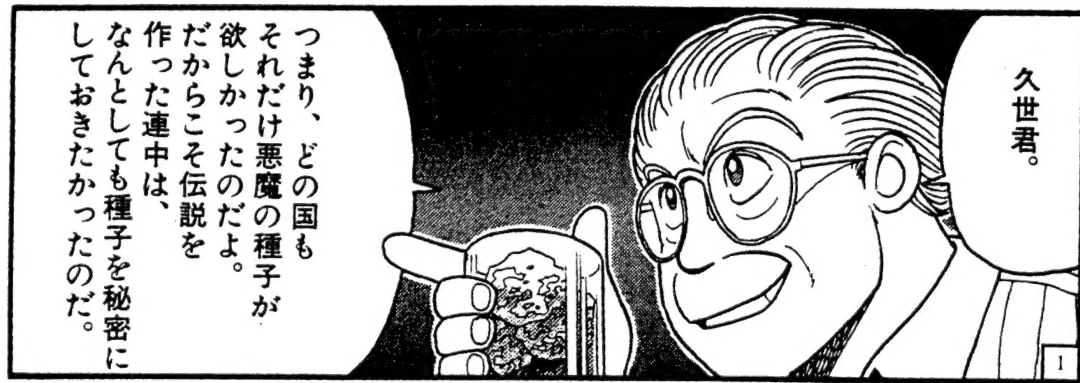
Kuze: そうです。そして、最近の研究で分かったのですが、
Sō desu. Soshite, saikin no kenkyū de wakatta no desu ga,
 that way is and recent research in became known (explan.) but
 それらの国々は、隣国との戦いに巻き込まれて滅んでいったらしいと。
sore-ra no kuniguni wa, ringoku to no tatakai ni makikomarete horonde itta rashii to.
 those countries as for neighboring countries with that were battles/wars into were drawn-and fell to ruin apparently (quote)
"Yes. And this is something discovered only in recent research, but those countries were all destroyed by becoming entangled in wars with their neighbors." (PL3)

- kenkyū refers to scientific or academic research, and wakatta is the plain/abrupt past form of *wakaru* ("come to know"); *saikin no kenkyū de wakatta* = "became known in/through recent research."
- makikomarete is the -te form of *makikomareru*, the passive form of *makikomu* ("entangle/draw in"); the -te form is being used to indicate the manner of the next mentioned action.
- horonde itta is the -te form of *horobiru* plus the plain/abrupt past form of *iku* ("go"). *Iku* after the -te form of verbs that represent changes or transformations implies that the change/transformation takes place or took place progressively, over a period of time.

4

Kuze: どうやらそれは悪魔の種子をめぐる熾烈な戦いだったそうなのです。
Dōyara sore wa Akuma no Shushi o meguru shiretsu na tatakai datta sō na no desu.
 apparently that as for devil 's seeds (obj.) center on hot/bitter battle/war was apparently (explan.)
"They were apparently extremely bitter wars involving the Devil's Seeds." (PL3)

- dōyara works together with words like *rashii*, *sō da*, *yō da*—i.e., forms indicating observation, hearsay, or indirect knowledge—to give the meaning "apparently (is)/appears/looks like."
- meguru means "go around/circle," and *Akuma no Shushi o meguru* is a complete thought/sentence ("[it] circles around/centers on the Devil's Seeds") modifying *shiretsu na tatakai* ("bitter battle/war") → "bitter wars centering on/involving the Devil's Seeds."
- datta is the plain/abrupt past form of *da* ("is/are"), and *sō da/desu* or *sō na no da/desu* after *da/datta* implies hearsay.



- 1 **Umezawa:** 久世君、つまり、どの国も それだけ 悪魔 の 種子 が 欲しかった のだ よ。
Kuze-kun, tsumari, dono kuni mo sore dake Akuma no Shushi ga hoshikatta no da yo.
 (name-fam.) in other words every country that much devil 's seeds (subj.) wanted (explan.) (emph.)
“In other words, Mr. Kuze, that’s how much every country wanted the Devil’s Seeds.” (PL2)

だからこそ伝説を作った連中は、なんとしても
Dakara koso densetsu o tsukutta renchū wa, nan to shite mo
 because is so (emph.) legend (obj.) made up people as for no matter what it takes

種子を秘密にしておきたかったのだ。
shushi o himitsu ni shite okitakatta no da.
 seeds (obj.) secret into wanted to make-and-leave (explan.)

“Precisely for that reason, those who made up the legend wanted to keep the seeds a secret no matter what it took.” (PL2)

- since *dake* means “only/alone,” *sore dake* looks like “only that/that alone,” but its idiomatic meaning is often “that much/so much.”
- *hoshikatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *hoshii* (“want”).
- *renchū* is an informal word for referring to a group/bunch of people.
- *okitakatta* is the past form of *okitai*, which is the “want to” form of *oku* (“set/leave/put in place”); a *-te* form + *oku* means to do the action and let the result stand, so *himitsu ni shite oku* is literally “make it a secret and leave it so” → “keep it a secret.”

- 2 **Umezawa:** 馬鹿ばかしい!! ひょっとして君は日本がそんな戦いに
Bakabakashii!! Hyotto shite kimi wa Nihon ga sonna tataikai ni
 is ridiculous perchance you as for Japan (subj.) that kind of war into

巻き込まれるとでも思っているのかね?
makikomareru to demo omotte iru no ka ne?
 will be drawn (quote) something like are thinking (explan.-?) (colloq.)

“It’s ridiculous. Are you somehow imagining that Japan will become entangled in such a war?” (PL2)

Kuze: いえ... そんな... 社長...
Ie, sonna, shachō...
 no/well that kind of co. pres.

“Well, no, not really, sir...” (PL3)

- *hyotto shite* (or *hyotto suru to*) is used to introduce guesses/conjectures with the feeling of: “it just might possibly be that...”; in a question it becomes “could it possibly be that...?”

- 3 **Kuze:** ただ、私はひどく気になるのです。
Tada, watashi wa hidoku ki ni naru no desu.
 only/just I/me as for terribly am bothered (explan.)
“It’s just that I can’t get it out of my mind.” (PL3)

- *hidoku* is the adverb form of *hidoi* (“terrible/horrible”).

- 4 **Kamimura:** 何人もこの種を国外に出してはならぬ。
Nanpito mo kono tane o kokugai ni dashite wa naranu.
 everyone/no one this/these seeds (obj.) outside of the country to must not take/let out
“No one must take these seeds outside the country.”

“These seeds must not be permitted to leave our borders.” (PL2)

国の民の為に使うべし。
Kuni no tami no tame ni tsukau beshi.
 country of people/populace for use should/must

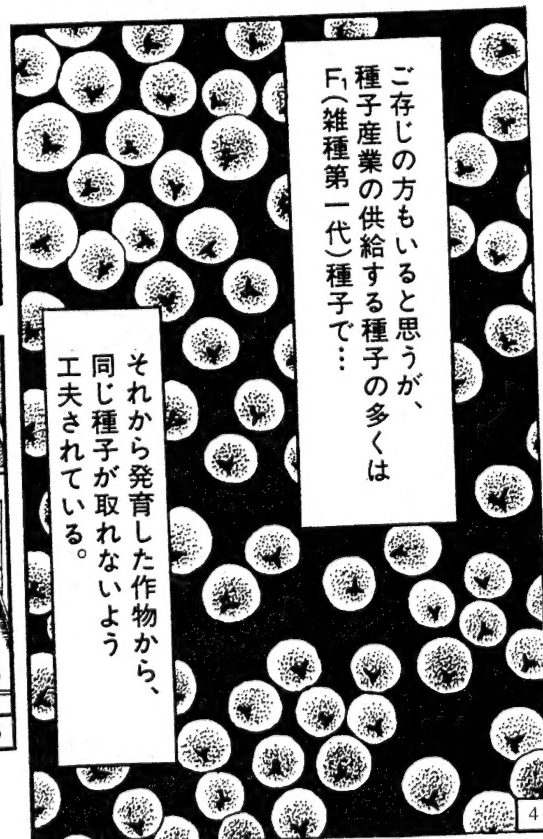
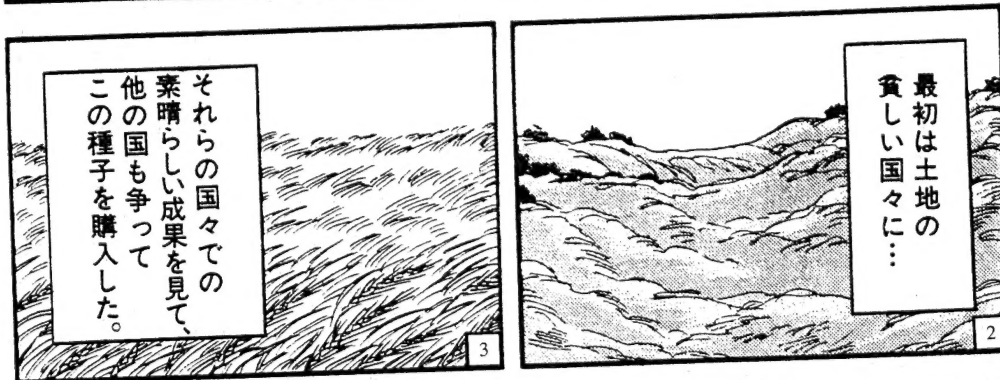
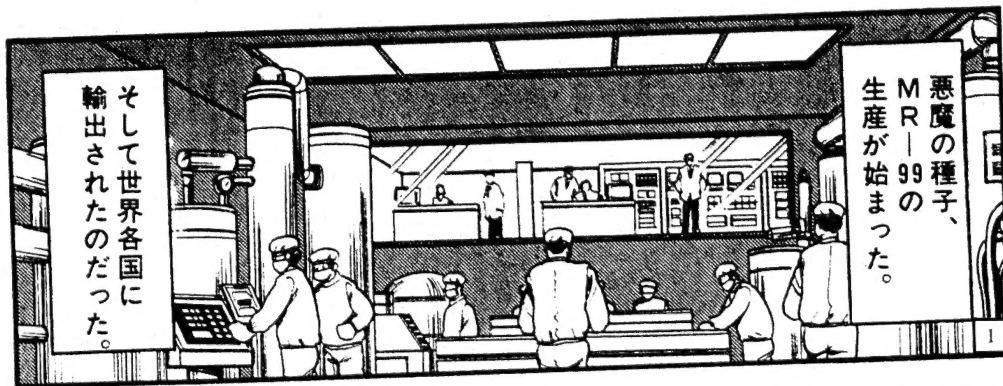
“They must be used only for the people of this country.” (PL2)

もしこの禁を破れば、恐るべき災厄が訪れるであろう。
Moshi kono kin o yabureba, osoru-beki saiyaku ga otozureru de arō.
 if this prohibition (obj.) if tear/break fearsome calamity (subj.) will visit probably/surely

“If anyone violates this prohibition, a fearsome calamity shall befall the land.” (PL2)

- *nanpito* is a literary/archaic equivalent for *dare* (“who”); *nanpito mo* in an affirmative sentence means “everyone,” and in a negative sentence, “not anyone/no one.”
- *kokugai* literally means “outside of the country,” and *ni* marks it as a destination.
- *naranu* is a literary negative form equivalent to *naranai*, so *dashite wa naranu* is equivalent to *dashite wa naranai*, a “must not” form of *dasu* (“take/let/put out”).
- *no tame ni* is literally “for the purpose/sake/benefit of” → “for.”
- *beshi* after the plain, non-past form of a verb can variously mean “can/should/must.” *Beshi* is a holdover from classical Japanese, and although its modifying form *beki* is still very common, the dictionary form *beshi* is now relatively limited and sounds archaic; it’s usually replaced by *beki da/desu* at the end of sentences today. One place *beshi* continues to be seen is on public signs giving instructions of one kind or another.
- *moshi* typically works together with a conditional form later in the sentence to give the meaning of “if”; *yabureba* is a conditional (“if/when”) form of *yaburu* (“tear,” or in the case of a rule/law/prohibition, “break/violate”).
- *osorubeki* combines an archaic form of the verb *osoreru* (“fear”) with *beki* (“should/must”), making a modifier that literally means “should be feared/is to be feared” → “fearsome/frightful.” *Osorubeki saiyaku* = “fearsome calamity.”
- *otozureru* literally means “visit” → *saiyaku ga otozureru* = “calamity will visit/befall [us/the country].”
- *de arō* is the conjectural form of *de aru*, which is a more literary/formal equivalent of *da/desu*, so it’s essentially equivalent to *darō/deshō* (“is probably/surely”).

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- 5 **Kamimura:** 非常に 興味深い 話 です ね。
Hijō ni kyōmi-bukai hanashi desu ne.
extremely interesting/curious story is (colloq.)
“It’s a most interesting story, isn’t it?” (PL3)

Umezawa: 神村君 ...
Kamimura-kun ...
(name-fam.)
“Ms. Kamimura ...” (PL2-3)

- 6 **Kamimura:** 久世さん。私 は 一体 どんな 災厄 が 来る のか、この 目 で見てみたいです わ。
Kuze-san. Watashi wa ittai donna saiyaku ga kuru no ka, kono me de mite mitai desu wa.
(name-hon.) I/me as for (emph.) what kind of calamity (subj.) will come(explan.-?) these eyes with would like to see(fem. colloq.)
“Mr. Kuze, I’d like to see with my own two eyes just what kind of calamity will come.” (PL3)
- *ittai* is an emphaziser for question words, so it can be like “[What] in the world?/[How] on earth?/[Where] the blazes” or “just [what kind of ~]?”
 - *mite* is the *-te* form of *miru* (“see/look at”), and *mitai* is the “want to” form of the same verb. A form of *miru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies “do the action and see what happens.”
 - *ittai donna saiyaku ga kuru no ka* is a complete question (“just what kind of calamity will come?”), and a form of *miru* after a complete embedded question ending in *ka* makes an indirect question → “I want to see just what kind of calamity will come.”

- 1 **Narration:** 悪魔 の 種子、 MR-99 の 生産 が 始まった。
Akuma no Shushi, Emu-āru kyūjūkyū no seisan ga hajimatta.
devil 's seeds (seed variety) of production (subj.) began
そして 世界 各国 に 輸出された のだった。
Soshite sekai kakkoku ni yushutsu saretā no datta.
and world various countries to was exported (explan.)
Production of the Devil’s Seeds, MR-99, began, and they were exported to countries around the world. (PL2)

- *hajimatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *hajimaru* (“[something] begins”).
- *kakkoku* can mean either “each/every country” or “various countries”; *sekai kakkoku* = “every country in the world” or “various countries around the world.”

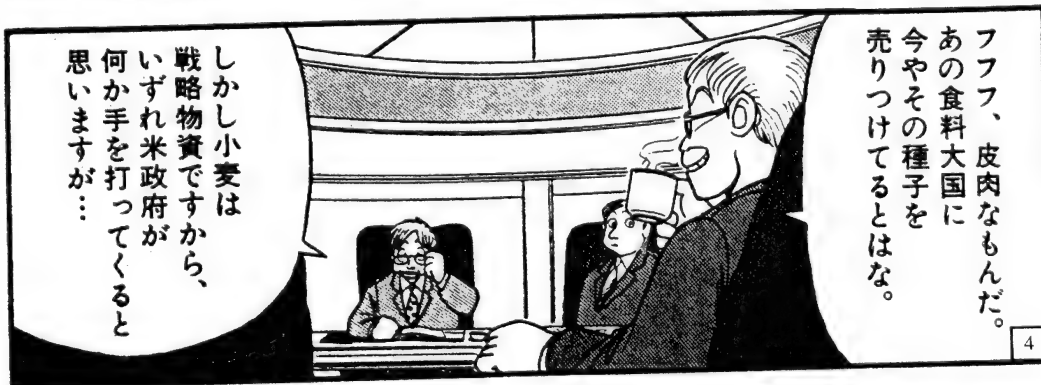
- 2 **Narration:** 最初 は 土地 の 貧しい 国々 に。
Saisho wa tochi no mazushii kuniguni ni.
at first as for land/soil (subj.) poor countries to
At first to countries with poor soil. (PL2)
- *tochi no mazushii* is a complete thought/sentence (“[their] land/soil is poor”) modifying *kuniguni* (“countries”).

- 3 **Narration:** それらの 国々 で の 素晴らしい 成果 を 見て、他の 国 も 争って この 種子 を 購入した。
Sore-ra no kuniguni de no subarashii seika o mite, hoka no kuni mo arasotte kono shushi o kōnyū shita.
those countries in that were spectacular results (obj.) seeing other countries also vying these seeds (obj.) purchased.
Seeing the spectacular results obtained in those countries, other countries vied with one another to purchase the seeds. (PL2)
- *de no* after a place name is literally like “that is in/at [that place]” or “that was in/at [that place].” Context determines the tense. *Sore-ra no kuniguni de no subarashii seika* = “the wonderful results that were [obtained] in those countries.”
 - *mite* is the *-te* form of *miru* (“see”); the *-te* form is here being used to indicate the cause or reason for what follows.
 - *arasotte* is the *-te* form of *arasou* (“compete/contend/vie”).

- 4 **Narration:** ご存じの 方 も いる と 思う が、種子 産業 の 供給する
Go-zonji no kata mo iru to omou ga, shushi sangyō no kyōkyū suru
(hon.)-know people also exist (quote) think but seed industry (subj.) supplies
種子 の 多く は、F₁ (雑種第一代) 種子 で、
shushi no ōku wa, efu-wan (zasshu dai-ichidai) shushi de,
seeds of majority/bulk as for F₁ first filial generation seeds are-and
それ から 発育した 作物 から、同じ 種子 が 取れない よう 工夫されている。
sore kara hatsuiku shita sakumotsu kara, onaji shushi ga torenai yō kufū sarete iru.
that/those from grew crops from same seeds (subj.) can’t be taken/harvested so that are contrived/fashioned
As some of our readers are no doubt aware, most seeds supplied by the seed industry are F₁ (first filial generation) seeds, and are contrived so that you cannot harvest the same seeds from the crops they produce. (PL2)

- *go-zonji (da/desu)* is a PL4 honorific equivalent of *shitte iru* (“know”), and *kata* is a more polite word for “person/people” than *hito*, so *go-zonji no kata* = “people who know.” *Go-zonji no kata mo iru to omou* is literally “[I] think people who know also exist,” here implying “[exist] among my/our readers” → “some/many of our readers no doubt know/are aware.”
- *shushi sangyō no kyōkyū suru* is a complete thought/sentence (“the seed industry produces/supplies [them]”) modifying *shushi* (“seeds”); *no* in turn makes *shushi* a modifier for *ōku* (“the majority/bulk”).
- *sore* (“that”) here refers back to *F₁ shushi* → “those seeds/them”; *hatsuiku shita* is the past form of *hatsuiku suru* (“grow”), and *sore kara hatsuiku shita* is a complete thought/sentence (“[they] grew from those seeds”) modifying *sakumotsu* (“crops”) → “the crops that grew from those seeds” → “the crops those seeds produce.”
- *torenai* is the negative form of *toreru* (“can take/harvest”), which is the potential form of *toru* (“take/harvest”).

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- 5 **Narration:** つまり、農家は毎年企業の供給する種子を買わざるを得ず、
Tsumari, nōka wa maitoshi kigyō no kyōkyū suru shushi o kawazaru o ezu,
in other words farmers as for each year industry (subj.) supplies seeds (obj.) must buy-and
In other words, each year farmers are forced to buy seeds supplied by the industry, and ...

- *kigyō no kyōkyū suru* is a complete thought/sentence (“the industry supplies [them]”) modifying *shushi* → “seeds the industry supplies.”
- *kawazaru* is a negative form of *kau* (“buy”); the *-zaru o ezu* (or *enai*) form of a verb means “can’t help but/have no choice but to/must [do the action].” The sentence continues to the next frame.

- 6 **Narration:** それ が 種子 産業 の 生命線 なのである。
sore ga shushi sangyō no seimei-sen na no de aru.
that (subj.) seed industry’s lifeline (is-explan.)
that is the seed industry’s lifeline. (PL2)
- *de aru* is a more formal/literary equivalent of *desu*, so *na no de aru* is essentially the same as *na no da/desu*, used when making explanations.

- 1 **Narration:** 1995年
Sen-kyūhyaku-kyūjūgo-nen
1995

Umezawa: 見たまえ!! たった 3年 で、MR-99 は 世界 小麦 市場 で
Mitamae!! Tatta sannen de, Emu-āru kyūjūkyū wa sekai komugi shijō de
see/look-(command) a mere 3 years in (seed variety) as for world wheat market in/of

30% のシェアを占めるに至った。

sanjuppāsento no shea o shimeru ni itatta.

30% of share (obj.) hold to reached

“Look! In a mere 3 years, MR-99 has reached the point of holding a 30% share in the world wheat market.”

“What did I tell you! MR-99 has gained a 30% share of the world wheat market in just 3 years!” (PL2)

- the suffix *-itamae* attaches to the stem form of a verb (*mi-* is the stem form of *miru*, “see/lookat”) to make a strong, authoritarian command. Here it carries the tone of “Look/see, it’s just as I said!/What did I tell you!”
- *no* makes 30% into a modifier for *shea* (“share”); 30% *no shea* = “a share of 30%.”
- *~ ni itatta* is the past form of *ni itaru*, which means “reaches as far as ~.”

- 2 **Executive A:** あと一年で 50% を越える 計算 です。
Ato ichinen de gojuppāsento o koeru keisan desu.
more 1 year in 50% (obj.) surpass calculation is
“Our calculations indicate it will surpass 50% in another year.” (PL3)

- *ato ichinen de gojuppāsento o koeru* is a complete thought/sentence (“[it] will surpass 50% in another year”) modifying *keisan* (“calculation”).

- 3 **Executive B:** アメリカからの 購入数 も どんどん 増えています な。
Amerika kara no kōnyū-sū mo don don fuete imasu na.
US from that are purchase/order quantities also rapidly are increasing (colloq.)
“The orders from America are also increasing rapidly.” (PL3)

- *kōnyū* = “purchases/purchasing,” and *-sū* is a suffix meaning “number/quantity,” so *kōnyū-sū* = “purchase quantities.” Since *kara* means “from,” *Amerika kara no kōnyū-sū* can mean “quantity of purchases from America,” but the context shows he’s talking about purchase orders coming from America rather than purchases Japan is making from America.
- *fuete imasu* is the polite form of *fuete iru* (“are increasing”), from *fueru* (“increase”).

- 4 **Umezawa:** フフフ、皮肉なものだ。あの食料大国に今やその種子を売りつけてる と は な。
Fu fu fu, hiniku na mon da. Ano shokuryō taikoku ni imaya sono shushi o uritsukete-ru to wa na.
(smug laugh) ironic thing is that major food country to now off/for that seeds (obj.) are selling (quote) as for (colloq.)
“Heh heh, it’s ironic, isn’t it—how we are now selling seeds to that agricultural superpower.” (PL2)

Executive B: しかし小麦は戦略物資ですから、いずれ米政府が
Shikashi komugi wa senryaku busshi desu kara, izure Bei-seifu ga
but wheat as for strategic commodity is because eventually US gov. (subj.)

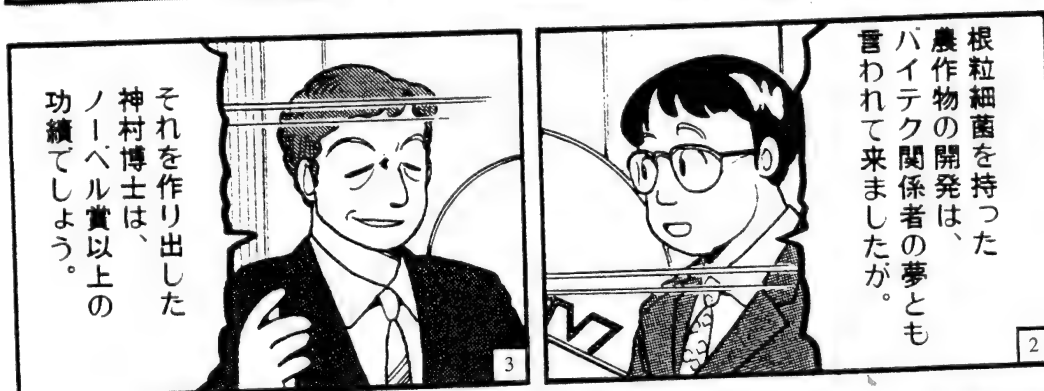
何か手を打ってくると 思います が。

nanika te o utte kuru to omoimasu ga.

something will take action (quote) think/expect but

“But wheat is a strategic commodity, so I expect the US government will eventually take some kind of action against us.” (PL3)

- *shokuryō* = “food/foodstuffs/provisions,” and *taikoku* is literally “great/major country”; *~ taikoku* is a label for designating countries that are major producers of the specified item or that are superpowers in the specified field: *shokuryō taikoku* = “major food producing country” → “agricultural superpower” (cf. *keizai taikoku* = “economic superpower”).
- *imaya* is an emphatic form of *ima* (“now”).
- *sono shushi* = “seeds off/for that”—here implying the seeds responsible for sustaining the US as an agricultural superpower.
- *uritsukete-ru* is a contraction of *uritsukete iru*, from *uritsukeru*, a combination of *uru* (“sell”) and *tsukeru*; *-tsukeru* after the stems of certain verbs implies the action is directed forcefully at something or someone, so *uritsukeru* is used when speaking of a sale from the seller’s point of view—especially when a strong seller is in a position to dictate terms.
- the sentence is inverted; normal order would be *ano shokuryō taikoku ni imaya sono shushi o uritsuketeru to wa hiniku na mon da na*.
- *te o utte kuru* is from the expression *te o utsu* (“take action/take the necessary measures [to resolve a problem]”). *Kuru* (“come”) implies that the action will be directed toward the speaker → “[the US government] will take action against us.”



5 Umezawa: フン!! その時は相談に応じてやるさ。
Fun!! Sono toki wa sōdan ni ōjite yaru sa.
 (snort) that time as for consultations to will respond-(for them) (colloq.)

"Humph! When the time comes, we'll let them negotiate with us." (PL2)

- *sōdan* can refer to any kind of formal or informal "consultation(s)"—among friends, with a formal counselor, between business clients/trade partners, etc.
- *ōjite* is the *-te* form of *ōjiru* ("respond"); *ni* marks what one is responding to. *Yaru* after the *-te* form of a verb often implies doing the action as a favor for someone.

1 Interviewer: MR-99のおかげで、世界の食料生産量が3%も増えたそうです。
Emu-aru kyūjūkyū no okage de sekai no shokuryō seisan-ryō ga sanpāsento mo fueta sō desu.
 (seed variety) thanks to world of food production amount (subj.) 3% as much as increased (hearsay)
"We're told that gross worldwide food production has risen 3%, thanks to MR-99." (PL3)

- *fueta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *fueru* ("increase"), and *sō da/desu* implies the speaker has heard about the action or condition from someone else.

2 Interviewer: 根粒細菌をもった農作物の開発は、
Konryū saikin o motta nōsakumotsu no kaihatsu wa,
 root nodule bacteria (obj.) possessed agric. products of development as for
 バイテク関係者の夢とも言われて来ましたが。
baiteku kankeisha no yume to mo iwarete kimashita ga.
 biotech related persons's dream (quote) also has been said but
"Developing agricultural products that possess [nitrogen fixing] bacteria in their root nodules has been called the ultimate dream of all those connected with biotechnology." (PL3)

- *motta* is the past form of *motsu* ("hold/possess"); *konryū saikin o motta* is a complete thought/sentence ("[they] possess root nodule bacteria") modifying *nōsakubutsu* ("agricultural products").
- *baiteku* is shortened from *baio-tekunorōjii*, the full Japanese rendering of "biotechnology."

- *~ kankei* means "*~*-related," and the suffix *-sha* means "person(s)," so *baiteku kankei-sha* = "persons related to/connected with biotechnology."
- *iwarete* is the *-te* form of *iwareru* ("is said/called"), from *iu* ("say/call"), and *kimashita* is the polite past form of *kuru* ("come"); *kuru* after the *-te* form of a verb often implies movement toward the speaker, here a movement in time from the past up to the present.

3 Expert: それを作り出した神村博士は、ノーベル賞以上の功績でしょう。
Sore o tsukuri-dashita Kamimura Hakase wa, Nōberu-shō ijō no kōseki deshō.
 that (obj.) created (name) Dr. as for Nobel Prize more than of achievement is probably/surely
"As for Dr. Kamimura who created that, hers is surely an achievement greater than the Nobel Prize."
"Yes, and that is exactly what Dr. Kamimura has achieved. It's an achievement that surpasses the Nobel Prize." (PL3)

- *tsukuri-dashita* is the past form of *tsukuri-dasu* ("create/invent").

4 Expert: しかしMR-99に限らず、一種の作物が
Shikashi, Emu-aru kyūjūkyū ni kagirazu, issurui no sakumotsu ga
 but (seed variety) to without limiting it single variety of crop (subj.)
 食料需要を支えるのは非常に危険です。
shokuryō juyō o sasaeru no wa hijō ni kiken desu.
 food demand (obj.) support (nom.) as for extremely dangerous is

"But without limiting [the discussion] to MR-99, as for having a single variety of a crop to support our food needs, it is extremely dangerous."
"But speaking not only of MR-99, it's extremely dangerous for us to rely on a single variety of crop to fill our food needs." (PL3)

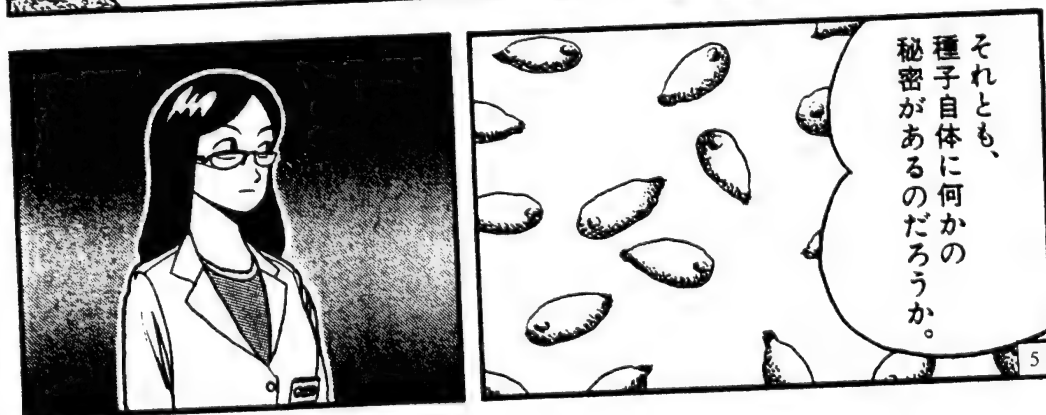
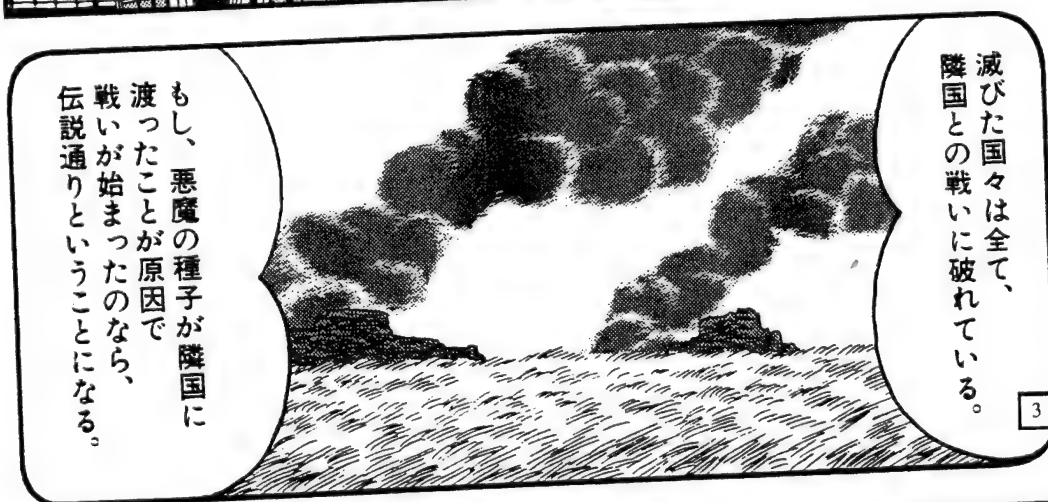
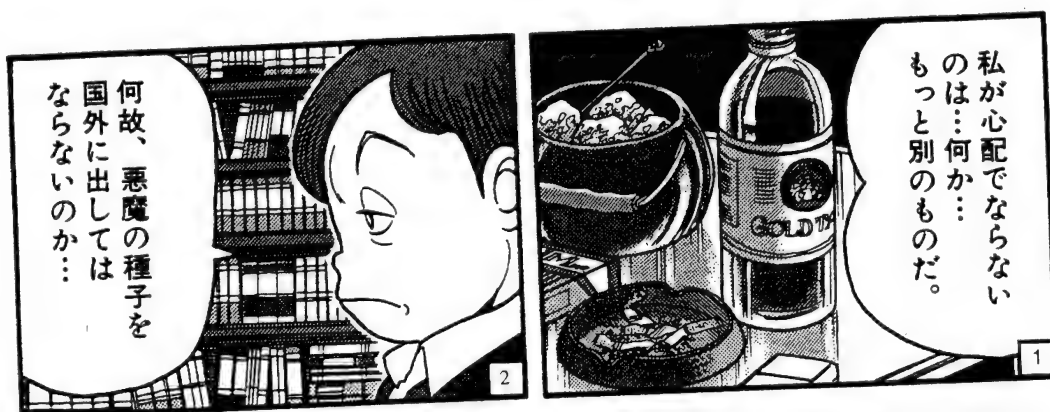
Expert: MR-99は、今まさにそうなりつつあります。
Emu-aru kyūjūkyū wa, ima masa-ni sō nari-tsutsu arimasu.
 (seed variety) as for now truly/indeed that way is becoming
"MR-99 is indeed even now becoming that way."

"That's precisely what we are on our way to doing with MR-99." (PL3)

- *kagirazu* is equivalent to *kagiranaide*, negative *-te* form of *kagiru* ("limit/restrict").
- *no* is a nominalizer that makes the complete thought/sentence *issurui no sakumotsu ga shokuryō juyō o sasaeru* ("a single variety of crop supports food demands") act as a single noun, and *wa* marks that noun as the topic: "as for having a single variety of crop support food demands, ..."
- *arimasu* is the polite form of *aru*, and *-tsutsu aru* after a verb implies "[the action] is even now occurring/being done."
- *Nari-* is the stem form of *naru* ("become"), so *nari-tsutsu aru* = "is even now becoming."

5 Expert: 一九七〇年のメキシカン・ジュンの例も示すように
Sen-kyūhyaku-nanajū-nen no Mekishikan Jun no rei mo shimesu yō ni
 1970 year of "Mexican June" of example also indicates as/like
 単一種が占有する穀倉地帯にもし病害虫が発生したら、
tan'itsu-shu ga sen'yū suru kokusō chitai ni moshi byōgaichū ga hassei shitara
 monoculture (subj.) occupies granary territory in if disease-carrying insects (subj.) if appear/break out

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5 (continued)

被害 は 甚大な もの に なる でしょう。

higai wa jindai na mono ni naru deshō.
damage as for serious/enormous thing to will become probably/surely

"As the example of the Mexican June in 1970 shows, if a major breadbasket area dominated by a single variety is hit by disease-carrying pests, the damage is likely to be enormous." (PL3)

- *kokusō* = "granary/grain elevator," and *kokusō chitai* refers to a geographical area that is considered a "granary/breadbasket" because of its fertile, grain-producing farmland. *Tan'itsu-shu ga sen'yū suru* is a complete thought/sentence ("a monoculture occupies it") modifying *kokusō chitai* → "a breadbasket that is occupied by a monoculture."
- *moshi* typically works together with a conditional form later in the sentence to give the meaning of "if."
- *hassei shitara* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *hassei suru* ("[insects/disease/a natural calamity/etc.] appears/occurs/breaks out").

6

Kuze: まさしく その 危険性 も ある だろう が、
Masashiku sono kiken-sei mo aru darō ga,

certainly/without a doubt that danger also exists probably but

"No doubt such a danger really does exist, but ..." (PL2)

- *sono* = "of that," and *sono kiken-sei* = "the danger of that"—where "that" refers back to the possibility of disease spreading in a monocultural breadbasket. The sentence continues to the next frame.

1

Kuze: 私 が 心配でならない の は... 何か... もっと 別の もの だ。

Watashi ga shinpai de naranai no wa... nanika... motto betsu no mono da.

I (subj.) am deeply worried thing as for something more/quite different thing is
"as for the thing that deeply worries me... it is something... a thing much different."

"what worries me so much is... something... quite different." (PL2)

- *shinpai* is a noun for "worry/concern/anxiety; *shinpai da* = "am/is/are worried," and *shinpai de naranai* is essentially a very emphatic expression for "am/is/are worried."

2

Kuze: 何故、悪魔 の 種子 を 国外 に 出してはならない のか?

Naze, Akuma no Shushi o kokugai ni dashite wa naranai no ka?

why devil's seeds (obj.) outside of the country to must not take/let out (explan.-?)

"Why is it that the Devil's Seeds must not be permitted to leave the country?" (PL2)

- *dashite wa naranai* is a "must not" form of *dasu* ("put/let out").

3

Kuze: 滅びた 国々 は 全て、隣国 と の 戦い に 破れている。

Horobita kuniguni wa subete, ringoku to no tatakai ni yaburete iru.

ruined countries as for all neighboring countries with that are wars in were defeated

"All of the countries that went to their ruin were defeated in wars with their neighbors." (PL2)

もし、悪魔 の 種子 が 隣国 に 渡った ことが 原因 で 戦い が
Moshi, Akuma no Shushi ga ringoku ni watatta koto ga gen'in de tatakai ga
if devil's seeds (subj.) neighboring countries to crossed over thing/situation (subj.) cause being fighting/war (subj.)

始まった の なら、伝説通り と いう こと になる。

hajimatta no nara, densetsu-dōri to iu koto ni naru.

began (explan.) if it is exactly according to legend (quote) say thing becomes

"If it is the case that the wars began because of the situation that the Devil's Seeds crossed over to a neighboring country, then it means that it is exactly according to the legend."

"If those wars started because the Devil's Seeds crossed over to the neighboring countries, then it bears out the legend." (PL2)

- *horobita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *horobiru* ("fall to ruin"); *horobita kuniguni* = "the ruined countries/the countries that went to their ruin."
- *yaburete iru* is from *yabureru* ("be defeated").
- *watatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *wataru* ("cross over"); *ni* marks the place to which someone or something crosses over. *Akuma no shushi ga ringoku ni watatta* is a complete thought/sentence ("the Devil's Seeds crossed over to a neighboring country") modifying *koto* ("thing," but here referring more abstractly to a "situation").
- *~ ga gen'in de* = "with ~ being the reason/cause" or "because of ~."
- *hajimatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *hajimaru* ("[something] begins").
- *~ no nara* = "if it is the case that ~."
- *~ to iu koto ni naru* (lit., "becomes a thing described as ~") is often equivalent to "means that ~."

4

Kuze: 社長 が 言う ように、単なる 種子 を めぐる 争い に すぎない の だろう か?

Shachō ga iu yō ni, tannaru shushi o meguru arasoi ni suginai no darō ka?

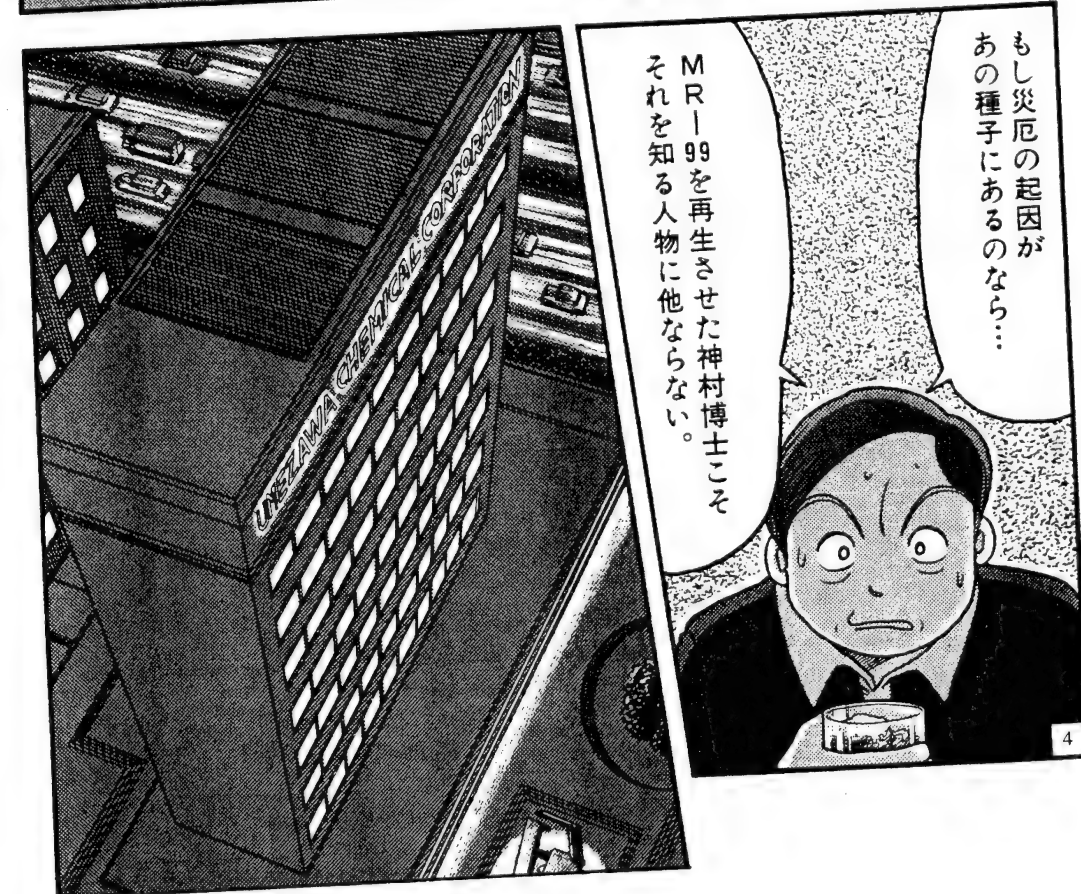
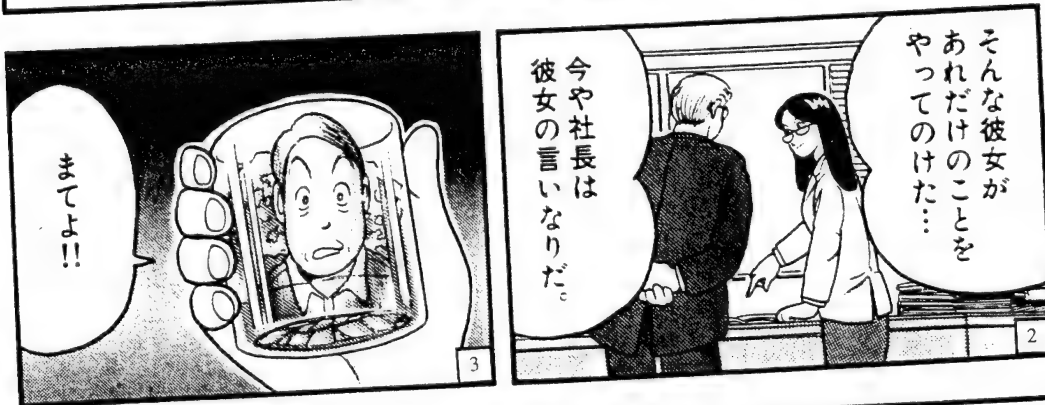
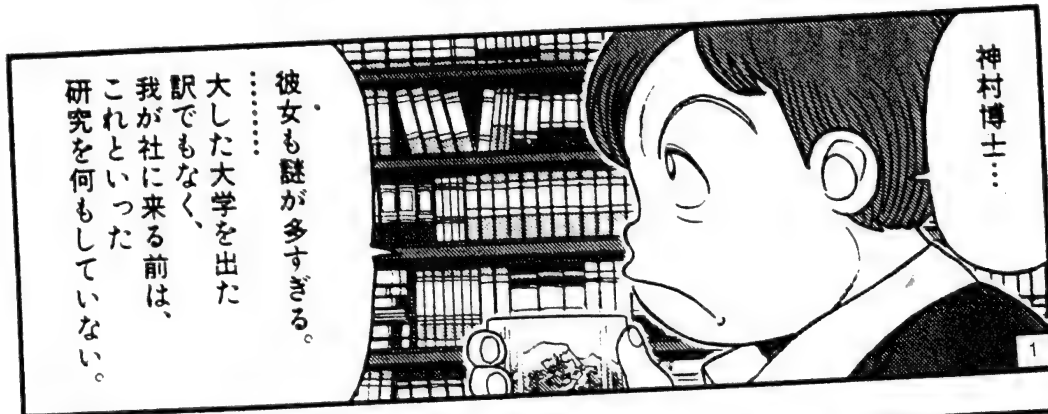
co. pres. (subj.) says like mere/simple seeds (obj.) center on conflict is nothing more than (explan.) I wonder?

"I wonder if, as our company president says, they were simply nothing more than conflicts centering on a seed?"

"Could the president be right in saying that the countries were simply fighting over a seed and there was nothing more to it than that?" (PL2)

- *~ ni suginai* is an expression for "is only/is nothing but/is nothing more than ~."
- *shushi o meguru* ("it centers on a seed") modifies *arasoi* ("fight/conflict/war"): "fighting/conflicts centering on a seed" → "fighting over a seed."

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- 5 **Kuze:** それとも、種子 自体 に 何かの 秘密 が ある の だろうか?
Soretomo, shushi jitai ni nanika no himitsu ga aru no darō ka?
or seeds themselves in some kind of secret (subj.) exists (explan.) I wonder
“Or do the seeds themselves hold some kind of secret?” (PL2)

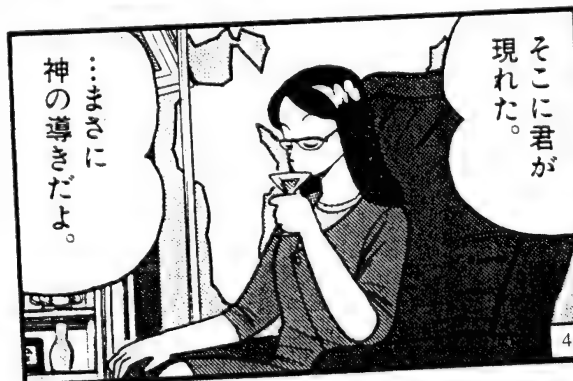
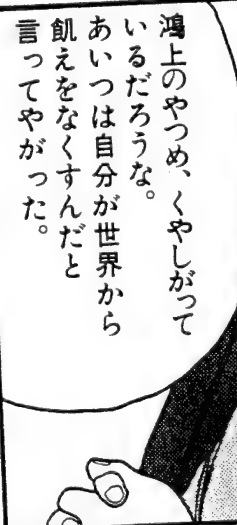
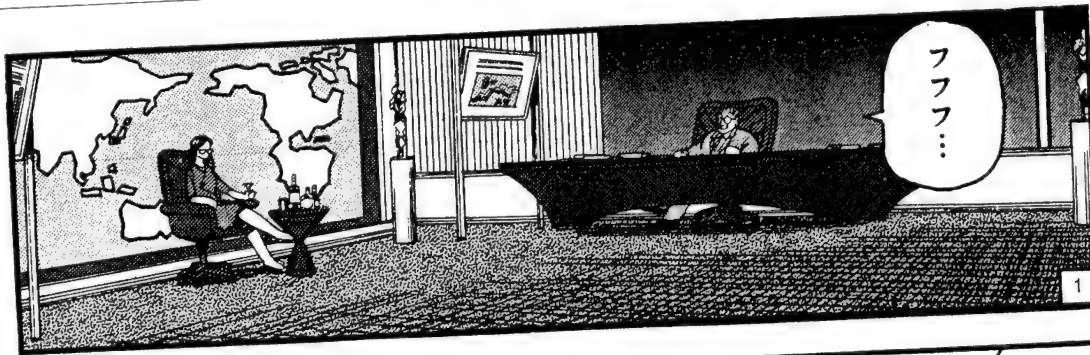
- 1 **Kuze:** 神村 博士... / 彼女 も 謎 が 多すぎる。
Kamimura Hakase... / Kanojo mo nazo ga ō-sugiru.
(name) Dr. she too/also mysteries/enigmas (subj.) are too many
“Then there’s Dr. Kamimura... There’s too much mystery about her as well.” (PL2)
大した 大学 を 出た 訳 でもなく、 我が社 に 来る 前 は
Taishita daigaku o deta wake demo naku, wagasha ni kuru mae wa
considerable univ. (obj.) graduated situation even is not something like our company to come before as for
これといった 研究 を 何も していない。
kore to itta kenkyū o nanimo shite inai.
noteworthy research (obj.) [not] anything has not done
“It’s not as if she graduated from a particularly prestigious university, and she hadn’t done any noteworthy research before coming to this company.” (PL2)
• *ō-sugiru* is from the adjective *ōi* (“are numerous/many”), and the suffix *-sugiru* means “too much/excessively,” so *ō-sugiru* = “are excessively many.” *Nazo ga ō-sugiru* is literally “the mysteries are too many.”
• *taishita* = “considerable/of considerable merit”; when combined with a negative it often becomes “of no particular merit.”
• *~ wake de mo naku* is a continuing form of *~ wake de mo nai*, a slightly more emphatic equivalent of *~ wake de wa nai* (or *~ wake ja nai*; literally, “it’s not the case/situation that ~”) → “it’s not the case that she graduated from a considerable university.”
• *kore to itta* is the past form of *kore to iu*, which means “of particular note/import/significance”—though it’s usually followed by a negative to give the meaning “of no particular note/not any ~ of particular note,” etc. Similarly, *nanimo* works together with a negative later in the sentence to mean “not anything/nothing.” *Shite inai* is the negative form of *shite iru* (“has done”), from *suru* (“do”). *Kore to itta kenkyū o nanimo shite inai* = “has not done any research of particular note.”

- 2 **Kuze:** そんな 彼女 が あれだけの ことを やってのけた。
Sonna kanojo ga are dake no koto o yatte noketa.
that kind of she/her (subj.) that much that is thing (obj.) managed to do.
“Yet she managed to accomplish that remarkable feat.” (PL2)
今や 社長 は 彼女の 言いなりだ。
Imaya shachō wa kanojo no iinari da.
now co. pres. as for her yes-man is
“And now she has the president wrapped around her little finger.” (PL2)
• *sonna* (lit., “that kind of”) as a modifier for *kanojo* (“she/her”) is like “she who is/was that kind of person.”
• *are dake* looks like “only that,” but its idiomatic meaning is “that much/many”—often, as here, implying that the number/item/action/accomplishment in question is a very large/remarkable one.
• *yatte noketa* is the past form of *yatte nokeru*, a slang phrase for “manage to do [something]/pull [something] off.”
• *inari* refers to a person who moves at someone else’s beck and call; *~ no iinari da* means the subject is “completely under ~’s thumb/wrapped around ~’s little finger/putty in ~’s hands.”

- 3 **Kuze:** まて よ!!
Mate yo!!
wait (emph.)
“Wait a minute!!” (PL2)

- *mate* is the abrupt command form of *matsu* (“wait”).

- 4 **Kuze:** もし 災厄 の 起因 が あの 種子 に ある のなら、
Moshi saiyaku no kiin ga ano shushi ni aru no nara,
if catastrophe of original cause (subj.) those seeds in exist if it is the case that
“If it’s true that the source of the calamities is in the seed itself,
MR-99 を 再生させた 神村 博士こそ それ を 知る 人物 に 他ならない。
Emu-aru kyūjūkyū o saisei saseta Kamimura Hakase koso sore o shiru jinbutsu ni hokanaranai.
(seed variety) (obj.) regenerated (name) Dr. (emph.) that (obj.) know personage is none other than
“then Dr. Kamimura, the one who regenerated MR-99, is precisely the one who should know.” (PL2)
• *moshi ~ no nara* gives the embedded complete thought/sentence *saiyaku no kiin ga ano shushi ni aru* (“the source of the calamity is in that seed”) a conditional meaning: “if it is the case that ~.”
• *saisei saseta* is the past form of *saisei saseru* (“cause to regenerate”), from *saisei suru* (“resuscitate/regenerate/reproduce”); *Emu-aru kyūjūkyū o saisei saseta* is a complete thought/sentence (“[she] caused MR-99 to regenerate”) modifying *Kamimura Hakase* (“Dr. Kamimura”) → “Dr. Kamimura who caused MR-99 to regenerate.”
• *koso* emphasizes *Kamimura Hakase* with the feeling of “none other than her”; in this case, it overlaps with the meaning of the expression *~ ni hokanaranai* (“is none other than ~”).
• *sore o shiru* is a complete thought/sentence (“[she] knows that”) modifying *jinbutsu* (“personage”).



1 Umezawa: フフフ
Fu fu fu
(self-satisfied laugh)
"Heh heh heh."

2 Umezawa: 私の夢がこんなにも早く実現するとはな。
Watashi no yume ga konna-ni mo hayaku jitsugen suru to wa na.
my dream (subj.) this much even quickly be actualized/fulfilled (quote) as for (colloq.)
"[I never imagined] that my dream would be fulfilled so soon!" (PL2)

鴻上のやつめ、くやしがっているだろうな。
Kōnoue no yatsu me, kuyashi-gatte iru darō na.
(name) who is guy-(derog.) is chagrined probably/surely (colloq.)
"That Kōnoue must really be kicking himself." (PL1-2)

あいつは自分が世界から飢えをなくすんだと言ってやがった。
Aitsu wa jibun ga sekai kara ue o nakusu n da to itte-yagatta.
that guy as for himself (subj.) world from hunger (obj.) eliminate (explan.) (quote) was saying-(derog.)
"He was saying that he wanted to eliminate hunger from this earth himself!" (PL1)

- *konna-ni mo* is a more emphatic form of *konna-ni* ("this much"); *hayaku* is the adverb form of the adjective *hayai* ("quick/fast"), so *konna-ni mo hayaku* = "this quickly/so quickly."
- *to wa* makes the entire preceding sentence into the topic of an unspoken exclamation, which is to say, it makes that topic itself into an exclamation. It can be any kind of exclamation—pleasure, chagrin, dismay—and here it is obviously an exclamation of glee.
- *yatsu* is an informal/slang word for "guy/fellow/person"; *no yatsu* after a name or title usually has at least a mildly belittling/derogatory feeling, and it's commonly used when finding fault with or deriding the person.
- *-me* after a word referring to a person shows contempt/derision/anger directed at that person, so here it goes hand in hand with the derogatory feeling of *yatsu*.
- *kuyashi-gatte iru* is from *kuyashi-garu* ("show signs of being chagrined"), a verb formed from the adjective *kuyashii* ("be vexed/mortified/chagrined"). The suffix *-garu* is attached to various adjectives of feeling (either psychological or physical) to create verbs that mean "show signs of being ~." The *-garu* form is used to speak of how another person is feeling—since that person's feelings are usually known only indirectly, from the way he/she allows his feelings to show.
- *aitsu* is a contraction of *ano yatsu* (informal/slang for "that guy").
- *itte-yagatta* is a contraction of *itte iyagatta*, a derogatory/insulting equivalent of *itte ita* ("was saying"). *Itte* is the *-te* form of *iu* ("say"), *i-* is the stem of *iru*, and *yagatta* is the past form of *yagaru*, a derogatory/insulting suffix that connects to the stem form of verbs.

3 Umezawa: 鴻上と決別して以来、やつほどの天才を
Kōnoue to ketsubetsu shite irai, yatsu hodo no tensai o
(name) with parted ways ever since/after that guy extent that is genius (obj.)
世界中 捜しまわったが、ダメだったよ。
sekai-jū sagashi-mawatta ga, dame datta yo.
throughout the world went around searching but no good/fruitless was (emph.)
"After parting ways with Kōnoue, I travelled all over the world looking for a genius of his caliber, but it was no use." (PL2)

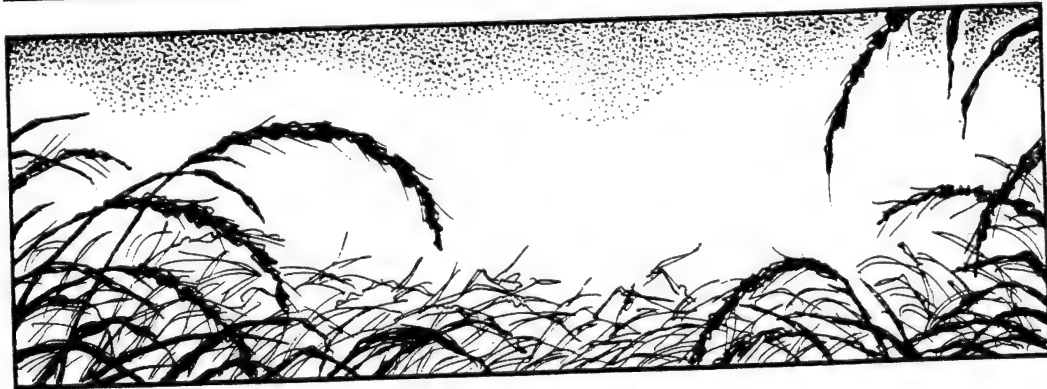
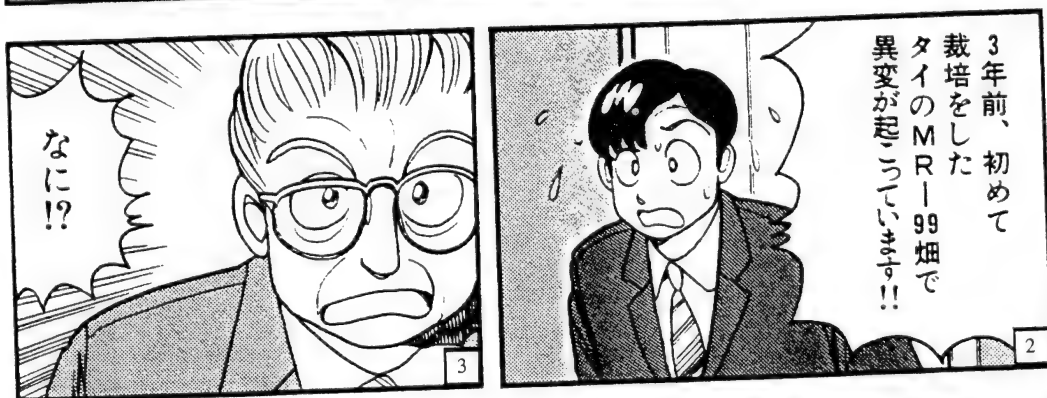
- *ketsubetsu shite* is the *-te* form of *ketsubetsu suru* ("part ways/have a falling out/break with"), and *irai* means "ever since ~ (until now)"; *ketsubetsu shite irai* = "ever since parting ways with."
- *X hodo no Y* means "a Y that is to the extent of X," so *yatsu hodo no tensai* = "a genius that is to the extent of him" → "a genius of his caliber/a genius like him."
- *sagashi-mawatta* is the past form of *sagashi-mawaru* ("travel around searching/looking for").

4 Umezawa: そこに君が現れた。 / まさに神の導きだよ。
Soko ni kimi ga arawareta. / Masa-ni kami no michibiki da yo.
there/that point at you (subj.) appeared truly/indeed god of guidance is (emph.)
"Then you showed up—indeed, brought to me by the hand of God." (PL2)

- *soko* is literally "that place/there," but here it refers more to a place/point in time—i.e., the point at which Umezawa had searched and searched and pretty much given up hope.
- *arawareta* is the past form of *arawareru* ("appear/show up").
- *kami no michibiki* is literally "the guidance of God" → "divine guidance/the hand of God."

5 Kamimura: 悪魔の導きかもしれませんよ。
Akuma no michibiki kamo shiremasen yo.
devil's guidance may possibly be (emph.)
"It could be the hand of the devil, you know." (PL3)

- *kamo shiremasen* is the polite form of *kamo shirenai* ("might be/may possibly be").
- *yo* often emphasizes something the speaker thinks the listener particularly needs to know or be reminded of: "~, remember/~, you know."



1 **Executive:** た、大変 です、社長!!
Ta- taihen desu, shachō!!
 (stammer) trouble/disaster is co. pres./sir
"Sir, it's a disaster!" (PL3)

Umezawa: どう した?
Dō shita?
 what/how did
"What's wrong?" (PL2)

- *taihen* refers to a "serious/troublesome/alarming situation," and *taihen da/desu!* is used as an exclamation in response to any cause for alarm.
- *dō* is "how/what" and *shita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *suru* ("do"), so *dō shita* is literally "What did you do?" But the expression is often used idiomatically to ask for an explanation of something that appears out of the ordinary: "What's wrong/What's the matter/What's the trouble?"

2 **Executive:** 3年 前、初めて 栽培 をした タイ の MR-99 畑 で
Sannen-mae, hajimete saibai o shita Tai no Emu-aru kyūjūkyū-batake de
 3 years ago first cultivation (obj.) did Thailand in MR-99 fields in
 異変 が 起こっています!!
ihen ga okotte imasu!
 mishap/unusual event (subj.) is occurring

"In the MR-99 fields first cultivated 3 years ago in Thailand, a mishap is occurring!"

"There's been a mishap in the MR-99 fields first cultivated 3 years ago in Thailand!" (PL3)

- *saibai o shita* is the past form of *saibai o suru*, literally "do cultivation" → "cultivate." *Hajimete saibai o shita* is a complete thought/sentence ("[we] first cultivated [them]") modifying *Tai no Emu-aru kyūjūkyū-batake* ("the MR-99 fields in Thailand").
- *okotte imasu* is the polite form of *okotte iru* ("is occurring"), from *okoru* ("occurs/happens").

3 **Umezawa:** なに?!
Nani?!
"What?!" (PL2)

4 **On-site staff:** 全ての 株 が 実 を つける 前に 枯死している んです!!
Subete no kabu ga mi o tsukeru mae ni koshi shite iru n desu.
 all plants (subj.) grain (obj.) attach/form before are withering (explan.)

"All the plants are withering and dying before they produce heads of grain!" (PL3)

- *kabu* when speaking of plants refers to a single plant or cluster.
- *mi* might be described as the "bearing part" of plants—i.e., "seeds/grains/nuts/berries/fruits"—and when speaking of *mi*, *tsukeru* means "form/bear/produce [seeds/grains/etc.]."
- *mae* = "before," and *mi o tsukeru mae* = "before producing grain"; *ni* marks this as the time frame when the next mentioned action takes place.
- *koshi shite iru* ("are withering") is from *koshi suru* ("wither and die").

5 **Umezawa:** どういう こと だ?! 病原菌 か?!
Dō iu koto da?! Byōgenkin ka?!
 what kind of thing/situation is disease causing bacteria (?)
"What's going on? Is it some kind of disease?" (PL2)

On-site staff: 原因 不明 です。
Gen'in fumei desu.
 cause unclear/unknown is
 "The cause is unclear."

"We've been unable to identify a cause." (PL3)

- asking a question with *da* is masculine and can sound very rough.

To be continued . . .

課長バカー代 野中英次



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Title: 第三十八章 鉄人
Dai Sanjūhasshō Tetsu-jin
 no. 38-chapter iron person
Chapter 38: Iron Man

- *dai* is like “no.” and *-shō* is the counter suffix for chapters in a book.
- we considered translating *tetsujin* as “Griddle Man,” but since this manga is a parody of the strong, silent, action-hero genre, “Iron Man” seemed more appropriate.

1 **Narration:** 課長 八神 宅
Kachō Yakami -taku
 section chief (name) residence
Section Chief Yakami's Residence

2 **Yakami:** 休日 の 昼下がり...
Kyūjitsu no hiru-sagari...
 day off of early afternoon
Early afternoon of a day off...

こんな 時 に は こだわりの入った 焼ソバ など つくってみる の も いい。
Konna toki ni wa kodawari no haitta yakisoba nado tsukutte miru no mo ii.
 this kind of time at as for discriminating yakisoba a thing like try making (nom.) too/also is good/appealing
Times like these are great for making the consummate yakisoba. (PL2)

- *hiru* = “noon,” and *hiru-sagari* = “a little after noon/early afternoon.”
- *kodawari* is the noun form of *kodawaru* (“be particular/scrupulous [about]”), and *haitta* is the past form of *hairu* (“enter”); the past form often implies “containing”, so *kodawari no haitta* means “containing scrupulousness” → “discriminating.” This modifies *yakisoba* (“stir-fried noodles”).
- *tsukutte* is the *-te* form of *tsukuru* (“make”); *miru* after the *-te* form of a verb means “try [doing the action],” so *tsukutte miru* = “try making.”
- *no* makes the preceding complete sentence *kodawari no haitta yakisoba nado tsukutte miru* (“[I will] try making some discriminating yakisoba”) act like a single noun.
- ~ *no mo ii* makes an expression like “[the described action], too, is good/appealing/satisfying.”

3 **Yakami:** オイル は 多すぎず、少なすぎず、かつ まんべんなく。
Oiru wa ō-sugizu, sukuna-sugizu, katsu manben-naku.
 oil as for not too much not too little moreover thoroughly/evenly
Not too much oil, not too little, and it must be spread evenly. (PL2)

- *ō-sugizu* and *sukuna-sugizu* are negative forms of *ō-sugiru* and *sukuna-sugiru*, the stem forms of the adjectives *ōi* (“abundant/plentiful”) and *sukunai* (“few/little”) plus the suffix *-sugiru*, which means “too much/excessively ~.”
- *katsu* is a word for “and/and moreover” seen/heard mostly in written language or formal speeches.

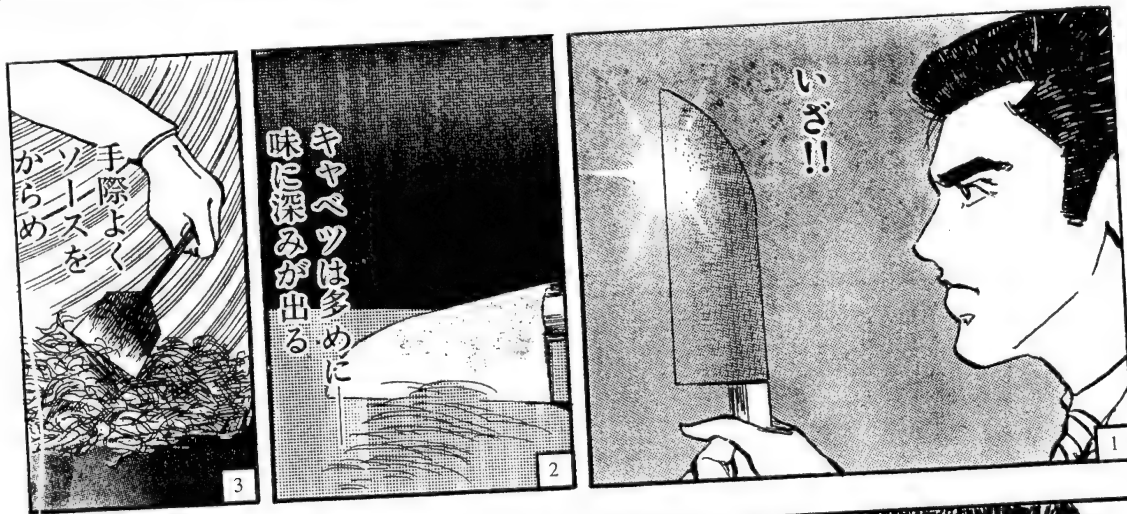
4 **Yakami:** 調味料... 特に ソース に は こだわりたい。
Chōmiryō... toku ni sōsu ni wa kodawaritai.
 seasoning especially sauce about as for want to be particular
You want to be particular about the seasoning—especially the sauce. (PL2)

- *kodawaritai* is the “want to” form of the verb *kodawaru* (“be particular/scrupulous [about]”). The particle *ni* is used to mark what one is being particular about.

5 **Yakami:** とはいえ、焼ソバ は 庶民 の 味。
To wa ie, yakisoba wa shomin no aji.
 though that may be yakisoba as for common people's taste
 メン は 市販 の もの で OK。
Men wa shihan no mono de okē.
 noodles as for sold generally of things/ones with is OK/fine
Yet, yakisoba is a food of the common people. Store-bought noodles will do. (PL2)

Bag: ヤキソバ
Yakisoba

- *to wa ie* at the beginning of a sentence refers back to what has just been said, implying “though I may say that/that said/though that may be.”
- *shihan* is a noun for “selling in the (open) market,” so *shihan no mono* refers to things/products that can be found in most any store → “(any) store-bought noodles.”
- “OK,” pronounced either *okkē* or *ōkē*, can be considered a fully naturalized word in Japanese, and is most often written this way in Roman letters rather than in katakana. The expression ~ *de okē* implies “~ is adequate/fine/fully acceptable.”



1 **Yakami:** いざ!!

Iza!!
(interj.)

Time to begin!! (PL2)

- *iza* is an interjection giving the feeling that the moment of truth/moment for action has come. It is a somewhat archaic/formal expression mostly used in written form.

2 **Yakami:** キャベツ は 多め に。 味 に 深み が 出る。
Kyabetsu wa ō-me ni. Aji ni fukami ga deru.

cabbage as for on the plentiful side (manner) flavor in depth (subj.) comes out

Use plenty of cabbage. It gives depth to the flavor. (PL2)

- *-me* is a suffix added mostly to adjectives to mean “a bit on the ~ side/somewhat ~,” so *ō-me*, from *ōi* (“abundant/plentiful”), means “on the plentiful side.” The particle *ni* essentially turns this into an adverb for the understood verb, *ireru* (“put/mix in”), so *ō-me ni* literally implies “mix in on the plentiful side.”
- *fukami* is a noun form of the adjective *fukai* (“deep”).

3 **Yakami:** 手際よく ソース を からめ...

Tegawa yoku sōsu o karame...
skillfully sauce (obj.) coat with-and

Deftly coat the noodles with sauce, and ...

- *karame* is the stem of the verb *karameru* (“coat/entwine with”); the stem is here being used as a continuing form: “coat with [sauce], and ...”

4 **Yakami:** 完璧だ。これで まずい ハズがない。

Kanpeki da. Kore de mazui hazu ga nai.
perfect is with this bad can't possibly be

... perfect! With this, there's no way it can be bad tasting.”

... perfect! There's no way this can be anything but delicious. (PL2)

- *~ hazu ga nai* follows adjectives or verbs to mean “there's no way it can/will be [as described]” or “there's no way [the action] can/will occur.”

5 **Yakami:** 火 つける の 忘れてた。

Hi tsukeru no wasurete-ta.
fire/flame turn on (nom.) forgot

I forgot turning on the flame.

I forgot to turn on the griddle. (PL2)

- the object markers have been omitted in this sentence; with them included, the sentence would be *Hi o tsukeru no o wasurete-ta*.
- *no* is a nominalizer that turns the complete sentence *hi (o) tsukeru* (“[I] turn on the fire/flame”) into a noun—“[the act of] turning on the flame”—which is the the direct object of *wasurete-ta*.
- *wasurete-ta* is a contraction of *wasurete ita* (“had forgotten”), from *wasureru* (“forget”).

Title: 第 三十八章 完

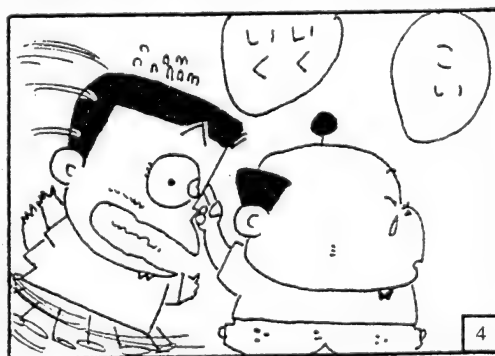
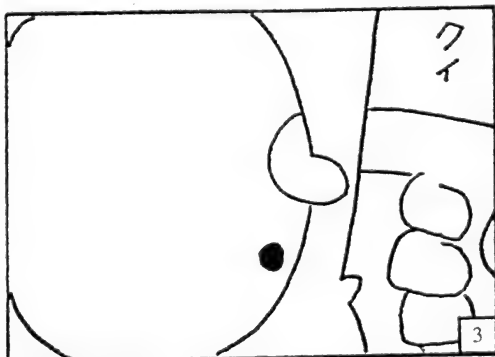
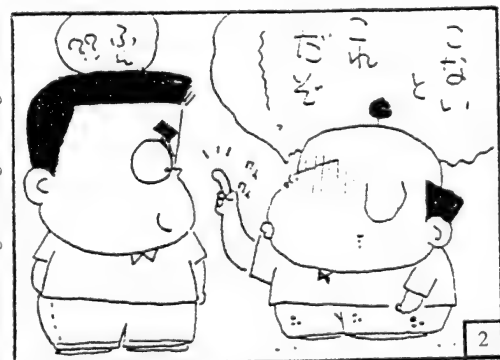
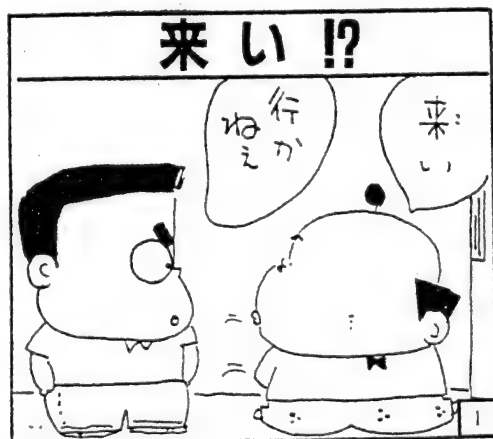
Dai- Sanjūhasshō Kan
no. 38-chapter end

Chapter 38 The End

うちの殿さま

Our Tono-sama

by 目黒やすし Meguro Yasushi



Title: 来い!?
Koi!?
Come!?

1 **Tono-sama:** 来い。
Koi.
come
"Come with me." (PL2)

Employee: 行かぬえ。
Ikanē.
won't go
"No." (PL2)

- *koi* is the abrupt command form of *kuru* ("come").
- *ikanē* is a rough, slang variation of *ikanai* ("not go"), the negative form of *iku* ("go"). The vowel combination *ai* often changes to *ē* or *ei* in certain dialects and masculine slang.

2 **Tono-sama:** 来ないと これだぞー。
Konai to kore da zō.
if don't come this is (emph.)
"If you don't come, it'll be this." (PL2)

FX: クイ クイ
Kui kui
(effect of hooking finger)

Employee: ふん??
Fun??
"Hmph!?" (PL1)

- *fun* is of "snort" of defiance, but the question marks show he's not quite sure what to make of Tono-sama's threat.

3 **FX:** クイ
Kui
(effect of hooking finger around something)

4 **Tono-sama:** こい。
Koi.
come
"Come with me." (PL2)

Employee: いく、いく。
Iku, iku.
will go will go
"I'm coming, I'm coming." (PL2)

- it's not unusual for English usage to make "come/coming" more natural when Japanese usage calls for *iku* (lit., "go").

うちの殿さま

Our Tono-sama

by 目黒やすし Meguro Yasushi



Title: 空 飛ぶ 人間
Sora Tobu Ningen
sky fly human being
The Flying Human

- *o* is understood after *sora*: *sora o tobu* = "fly through the sky"; this complete thought/sentence modifies *ningen* ("human being/person") → "the human who flies through the sky" → "the flying human."

1 Tono-sama: あーッ! トリだ!
A! Tori da!
(interj.) bird is
"Hey! It's a bird!" (PL2)

Tono-sama: ジェット機だ!
Jetto-ki da!
jet plane is
"It's a jet plane!" (PL2)

- *a!* is an interjection used when suddenly noticing something: "oh!/hey!"
- the generic word for "airplane" is 飛行機 *hikōki*, where *hikō* literally means "fly and go/go by flying" and *ki* means "machine" → "flying machine." Based on this, *-ki* is used as a suffix meaning "plane," and *jetto* is the Japanese rendering of the English "jet," so *jetto-ki* = "jet plane."

2 Tono-sama: UFOだ!
Yūfō da!
UFO is
"It's a UFO!" (PL2)

Tono-sama: ロケットだ!
Roketto da!
rocket is
"It's a rocket!" (PL2)

- "UFO" is invariably written with the English letters, and most commonly read as a single word, ユーフォー *yūfō*—though one also hears it spelled out in katakana ユー・エフ・オー *yū efu ō*.
- *roketto* is the Japanese rendering of the English word "rocket."

3 Tono-sama: アドバルーンだ!
Adobarūn da!
ad balloon is
"It's an advertising balloon!" (PL2)

Tono-sama: 紙ヒコーキだ!
Kami-hikōki da!
paper airplane is
"It's a paper airplane!" (PL2)

Flyer: とっくに おりてる!
Tokku ni oriteru!
long since have landed
"I landed a long time ago!" (PL2)

- *adobarūn* is from the English "ad" (from "advertising") and "balloon."
- *tokku-ni* implies the action took place a long time ago.
- *oriteru* is a contraction of *orite iru* ("have landed"), from *oriru* ("get/come down" or when flying, "land").

ダイヤモンド

Title: ダイヤモンド
Daiyamondo
Diamond

- 1 **Woman:** ダイヤ が 買えなくて
Daiya ga kaenakute
diamond (subj.) couldn't buy-(cause)
タイヤ にした って 言う 気 でしょ。
taiya ni shita tte iu ki desho.
tire made it (quote) say intent is, isn't it/right?
"You're going to tell me you couldn't buy a diamond so you decided to get a tire instead, aren't you?"
(PL2)

- *daiya* is the abbreviated form of *daiyamondo*, the full Japanese rendering of the English word "diamond." *Taiya* is the Japanese rendering of the English word "tire." The similarity of *daiya* and *taiya* allows them to be associated here, but obviously the same association does not work for English.
- *kaenakute* is a negative *-te* form of *kaeru* ("can buy"), which is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *kau* ("buy"); the *-te* form is used to indicate a reason or cause.
- *~ ni shita* is the past form of *~ ni suru*, which means "make it ~" in the sense of making a choice/decision.
- *tte* is a colloquial equivalent of quotative *to*; it marks the complete thought/sentence *daiya ga kaenakute taiya ni shita* ("[you] couldn't buy a diamond so [you] made it a tire/decided on a tire") as the specific content of what she thinks he wants/intends to say.

- 2 **Man:** よし、あっち 行け。
Yoshi, atchi ike.
all right over there go
"All right, get outta here." (PL2)

Sound FX: コロ コロ
Koro koro
(effect of rolling)

- *atchi* is an informal equivalent of *achira* ("that direction/over there"), and *ike* is the abrupt command form of *iku* ("go"); *atchi ike* is used like the English expressions "go away/get out of here/get lost."

- 3 **Man:** 実 はダイヤモンド 高かった んで...
Jitsu wa daiyamondo takakatta nde...
truth as for diamond was high/expensive because/so
"Actually, a diamond was too expensive, so..."
(PL2)

Sound FX: ゴソ ゴソ
Goso goso
Rustle rustle

- *jitsu* = "truth/fact," and *jitsu wa* = "the truth is/in fact/actually"; *jitsu wa* is often used as a kind of "preface" to soften awkward explanations.
- *takakatta* is the past form of the adjective *takai* ("high/expensive").
- *nde* is a contraction of the particle *node* ("because/so").

- 4 **Woman:** ダイヤモンド が 高くて
Daiyamondo ga takakute
diamond (subj.) was expensive-(cause)
アーモンド にした って 言う の?
āmondo ni shita tte iu no?
almonds made it (quote) say (explan.-?)
"Are you going to say that a diamond was too expensive so you decided to get some almonds?"
(PL2)

Man: ゲッ!
Ge!
"Urk!"

- *takakute* is the *-te* form of *takai*; again, the *-te* form is used to indicate a reason/cause.
- the common *-amondo* ending allows the association between *daiyamondo* and *āmondo*; in this case some of the similarity can be seen in English as well.

お墓参り



Title: お墓参り
O-hakamairi
(hon.)-grave visit
Visiting the Ancestral Grave

1 **Ghost:** うちの子孫は今年も誰も来ん。
Uchi no shison wa kotoshi mo dare mo kon.
my house/family of descendants as for this year also no one not come
"Once again this year none of my descendants have come." (PL2)

Woman: おじい様、来ましたよ。
Ojiisama, kimashita yo.
grandfather came (emph.)
"Grandfather, I've come." (PL3)

Gravestones: ○○ 家
Maru-maru -ke
blank-blank family
So-and-so Family

- *uchi* is literally "inside," but it's used frequently to refer to one's own house or family; *uchi no* = "my house's/my family's" or in this case just "my," and *uchi no shison* = "my descendants."
- *daremo* followed by a negative verb means "no one [does the action]"; *kon* is a contraction of *konai*, negative of *kuru* ("come"), so *daremo kon* = "no one comes."
- *kimashita* is the polite past form of *kuru* ("come").
- ○ (*maru*, lit., "circle") is a common way to indicate a blank or variable in Japanese writing. They most commonly come in twos: ○○ = *maru-maru*.

2 **Ghost:** えっ、こんなカワイイ娘が子孫?
E!, konna kawaii musume ga shison?
huh/what? this much/so cute girl (subj.) descendant
"What? A girl this cute is my descendant?" (PL2)

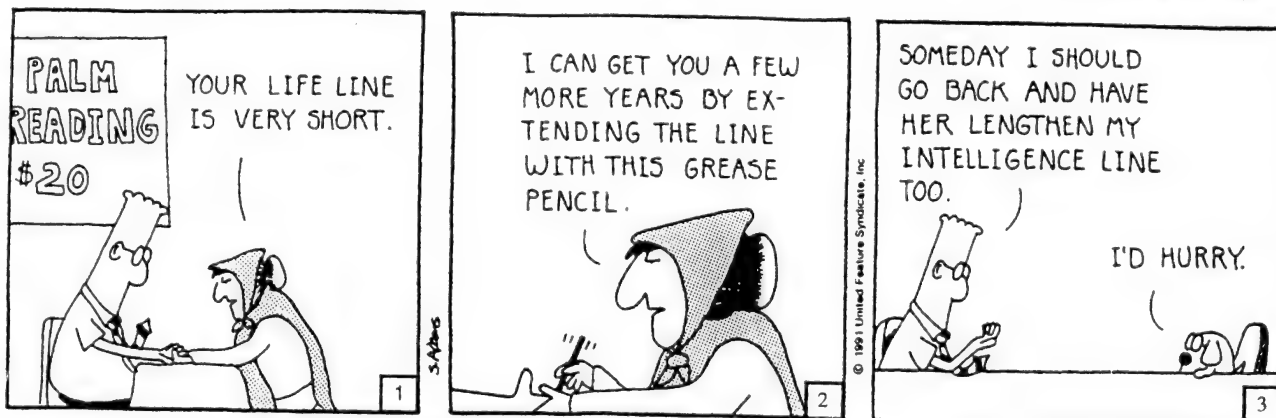
- *konna* modifying an adjective is short for *konna-ni* ("this much"), so *konna kawaii* = "this much cute" → "so cute/this cute."
- *musume* can mean "daughter" or just "girl."

3 **Ghost:** あっ、あの子じゃ。
A! ano ko ja.
(interj.) that child is
20年前来たあの子じゃ。
Nijūnen-mae kita ano onna no ko ja.
20 yrs. ago came that girl is
"I know, it's that girl. It's that girl who visited 20 years ago." (PL2)

- *a!* indicates the speaker has suddenly noticed/recognized/realized something, like "Oh!/that's right!/I know!"
- *ja* is used by many older male speakers as a substitute for *da* ("is/are").
- *-mae* (or *-mae ni*) after a time span means "[that much time] ago."
- *kita* is the past form of *kuru* ("come"), and *nijūnen-mae kita* = "[she] came 20 years ago"; this is a complete thought/sentence modifying *ano onna no ko* ("that girl") → "that girl who came 20 years ago."

4 **Woman B:** うちのお墓ですよ。
Uchi no o-haka desu yo.
my house/family's (hon.)-grave is (emph.)
"This is my family's grave." (PL3)

- *yo* is often used to emphasize information that the speaker thinks the listener particularly needs to know.



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1

Sign: Palm Reading \$20

手相 \$20

Tesō Nijū-doru

Palm reader: "Your life line is very short."

あなたの生命線はとっても短いわね。
 Anata no seimei-sen wa tottemo mijikai wa ne.
 your life line as for very short (fem. colloq.)

- palm reading は手相を見ることで palm reader は手相見のこと。
- *tottemo* is a colloquial variation of *totemo* ("very much/tremendously/extremely"); it tends to feel even more emphatic than *totemo*.

2

Palm Reader: "I can get you a few more years by extending the line with this grease pencil."

この油性鉛筆で生命線を延ばして、
 Kono yusei-enpitsu de seimei-sen o nobashite,
 this grease pencil with life line (obj.) lengthen-(means)
 あと何年か寿命を長くしてあげましょう。
 ato nan-nen ka jumyō o nagaku shite agemashō.
 more/further several years lifespan (obj.) I'll make longer-(for you)

- can はこの場合「できる」というより、「してあげる」という意味。
- a few more years は a few more years of life、つまり「寿命をもう数年」ということ。
- grease pencil 「油性鉛筆/ダーマトグラフ」。
- *nobashite* is the *-te* form of *nobasu* ("extend/lengthen"); the *-te* form is being used to indicate manner/means, so *nobashite* is like "[do something] by extending."
- *nagaku shite* is the *-te* form of *nagaku suru* ("make long/longer"), combining the adverb form of the adjective *nagai* ("long") and the verb *suru* ("do/make"). *Agemashō* is the polite volitional ("let's/I shall") form of *ageru*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the speaker/subject will do the action for someone else's benefit.

3

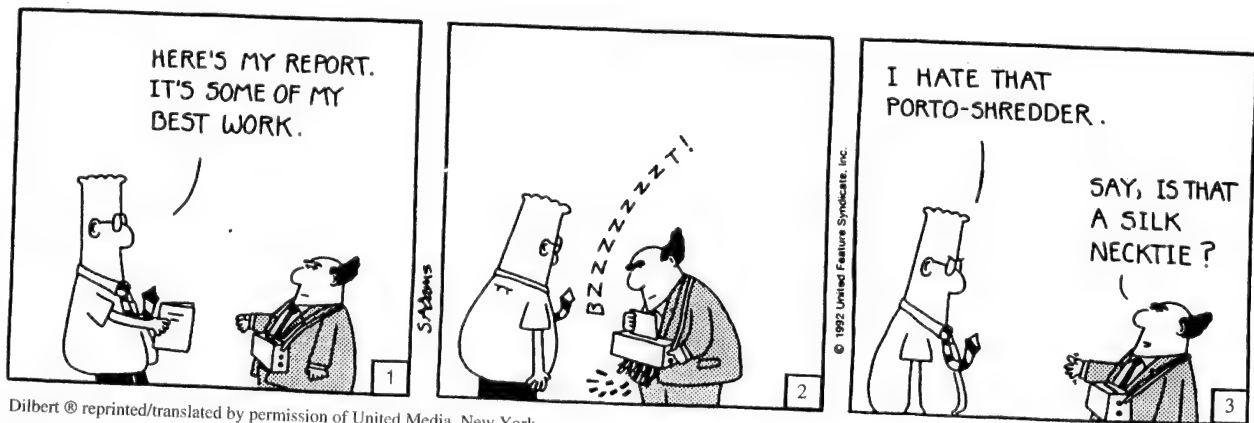
Dilbert: "Someday I should go back and have her lengthen my intelligence line too."

そのうち、またあの手相見のところに行って、
 Sono uchi, mata ano tesōmi no tokoro ni itte,
 in time/eventually again that palm reader's place to go-and
 頭脳線も長くしてもらったほうがいいな。
 zunō -sen mo nagaku shite moratta hō ga ii na.
 intelligence line also have her make longer is better to (colloq.)

Dogbert: "I'd hurry."

オレならすぐ行くね。
 Ore nara sugu iku ne.
 I/me if it were immediately would go (colloq.)

- someday 「そのうち/いつか」。
- have her lengthen ~ 「彼女に~を長くしてもらおう」。have の使役用法。
- I'd hurry = I would hurry [if I were you] 「私なら急ぐ」→「急いでそうする」。



Dilbert © reprinted/translated by permission of United Media, New York.

1 **Dilbert:** "Here's my report. It's some of my best work."

報告書 が できました。私 の した 仕事 のうちでも 上出来の 部類 です。
Hōkokusho ga dekimashita. Watashi no shita shigoto no uchi de mo jōdeki no burui desu.
 report (subj.) is finished I/me (subj.) did work even among excellent/well-done part is

- Here's my report = Here is my report 「これは私の報告書です」 → 「報告書です」 → 「報告書ができました」。
- It's = It is.
- *dekimashita* is the polite past form of *dekiru* ("be completed/become ready"), so the Japanese actually says "my report has been completed/is ready." This seems more natural for the situation than a literal translation (see first note).
- *shita* is the past form of *suru* ("do"); *watashi no shita* ("I did [it]") modifies *shigoto* ("work") → "work that I did" → "my work." No often replaces *ga* to mark the subject in modifying clauses.

2 **Sound FX:** BZZZZZZT!

ザザザザザザッ!
 Za za za za za za!

3 **Dilbert:** "I hate that porto-shredder."

その携帯用シュレッダー、大嫌いですよ。
Sono keitai -yō shureddā, dai-kirai desu yo.
 that portable use shredder hate very much. (emph.)

Boss: "Say, is that a silk necktie?"

おっ、そのネクタイはシルクかい?
O! Sono nekutai wa shiruku kai?
 (interj.) that necktie as for silk (?)

- porto-shredder は portable shredder のこと。
- Say は間投詞として相手の注意を引いたり、驚きを表わすのに使用する。「おい／ちょっと／あれ／おや」など。
- the suffix *-yō* means "for the purpose of" or "to be used for/as."
- *kirai* is a noun for "dislike/hatred," and *kirai desu* (or *da*) is equivalent to the English verbs "dislike/hate"; the prefix *dai-* means "great/large," so *daikirai desu* = "hate very much."



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1 Garfield: "Hey, Jon, how's this for an innocent smile?"
 おい、ジョン、罪のなさそうな微笑としてこんなのはどうかな?
Oi, Jon, tsumi no nasasō na bishō to shite konna no wa dō ka na?
 (interj.) (name) seems innocent smile as this kind of one as for how I wonder

- How's this for = How is this for 「～としてこんなのはどうか」。
- innocent smile はこの場合、悪いことをしたのをごまかすために「しらばっくれてみせた／とぼけてみせた微笑」のこと。
- *tsumi no nasasō na* is from *tsumi ga nai* (lit., "have no guilt/be without guilt"); *nasasō na* is the modifying form of *nasasō da/desu*, which means "seems/appears to be without," so *tsumi no nasasō na bishō* is literally "smile that seems to be without guilt."
- *dō ka na?* is literally the conjectural question "I wonder how it is?" but when the question is directed at another person it is like "I wonder how it is in your opinion?" —i.e., it asks what the other person thinks of the thing in question.

2 Jon: "Now what have you done, Garfield?"
 ガーフィールド、おまえいったい何やらかしたんだ?
Gāfīrudo, omae ittai nani yarakashita n da?
 (name) you (emph.) what did/committed (explan.)

Garfield: "Hmmm, needs more work."
 ウムムム、もっと練習しないとだめだな。
Umumumu, motto renshū shinai to dame da na.
 (interj.) more if don't practice is no good/won't do (colloq.)

- Now はここでは「今度は／いったい」などの意味を添える。
- what have you done はこの場合、「何をしでかした／何をやらかした」など、何か悪いことをしたのではないかと疑っていることを意味する。
- needs more work は the smile needs more work の意味で、疑われないような微笑をつくるにはもっと工夫や練習が必要だということ。
- ending a question with *da* gives a rough, masculine feeling.
- we've used *ittai*, which emphasizes question words, to express the emphatic effect of "now" in this context.
- *yarakashita* is the past form of *yarakasu*, a slang word for "do/commit" that usually implies the action being spoken of was undesirable/problematic in some way. *O*, to mark *nani* ("what") as the direct object, has been omitted.
- *renshū shinai* is the negative form of *renshū suru* ("practice"); *to* after a verb can make a conditional "if" meaning—or after a negative verb, "if not": *renshū shinai to* = "if [I] don't practice," and *motto renshū shinai to dame da* = "it won't do if I don't practice more" → "I must practice more."

Humorous Haiku

Poems submitted by our readers
Illustrations by Anthony Cowsley

川柳

SENNRYU

Lost in Osaka

stones wandering without eyes;

more kanji study

漢字読めず

Kanji yomezu

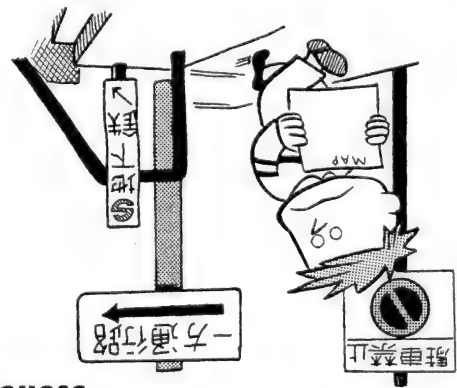
ウロウロ大阪

uro-uro Osaka

目なし碁石

me nashi ishi

by David A. Silver, Morris, CT



- yomezu is equivalent to yomenakute, a negative -te form of yomeru ("can read").
- uro-uro gives the effect of wandering around in confusion; the verb form is uro-uro suru.
- me nashi ishi (碁石 is normally pronounced go-ishi) refers the stones in the game of go (Go). When a group of stones in play are trapped and have no "liberties," they're said to have no "eyes." Subsequent play usually brings them out to the center of the board where sometimes they are referred to as "wandering without eyes," just as someone who can't read much kanji might wander about Osaka.

The critical news held back until the postscript of the long letter.

書く手紙

kaku tegami

こと追伸に

koto tsushin ni

肝心な

Kanjin na

by 鷹の爪 (Taka no Tsume, "Hawk Talons"),
Kanagawa, Japan



- Kanjin na is a modifying noun meaning "important/essential/main."
- tsushin is the equivalent of "P.S." at the end of a letter.
- Kanjin na koto o tsushin ni kaku is a complete sentence ("[The writer] writes the critical news in the postscript") modifying tegami ("letter"), so the full meaning becomes "the letter that is written with the critical news in the postscript."

Christmas is over Too much food, presents, and cheer Let's go to the mall.

クリスマス

Kuritsumasu

終わった今度は

owatta kondo wa

バーゲンだ

bāgen da.

by 静かな詩人 (Shizuka na Shijin, "The Quiet Poet"), USA



- owatta is the abrupt past form of owaru
- ("something] finishes/ends").
- kondo is literally "this time/opportunity," often meaning "now" or "next."
- bāgen is from the English word "bargain," and in Japanese usually refers to gain, "bāgen sēru" ("bargain sale") → "sale".
- We realize this differs from the English poem, but bāgen is the closest we could come to "let's go to the mall," while at the same time letting Japanese readers know that the post-Christmas season at the malls in the US is a time for sales.

Comics for the Career Woman

As Japanese women establish a more prominent presence in the work force, a new genre of manga has emerged—chronicling the life of the “Career Woman.”

by T.R. Reid

One of the favorite stereotypes among Western reporters covering Japan is the familiar old story of the “filthy and violent adult comic books.” Every few years some correspondent cranks out a piece suggesting—as the *New York Times* did in a recent page-one story—that Japanese men are obsessed with sex, that Japanese women’s main role in society is to submit to male domination, and that this is all set forth clearly in Japan’s popular manga.

There are, of course, filthy and violent manga in Japan. (To my chagrin, one of them bears the katakana version of my own name: リード). But these magazines represent mere droplets here and



The “O-shigoto Desu!” crew with all the trappings of a modern office.



Nojima Kotori (from the manga serial “O-shigoto Desu!”) announces that she wants nothing to do with marriage and children: “I only want to work!”

there in the vast manga sea. The American reports focusing only on porno manga are about as accurate as a Japanese news story I saw recently describing Larry Flint’s *Hustler* as a “representative American news magazine.”

To focus on the manga that treat women as mere sex objects, moreover, is to miss one of the most important social phenomena to hit Japanese society in the '90s: the rapid growth of a new class of career-track business women. Millions of Japanese women are graduating from colleges and setting out to take long-term jobs in big or small companies. Although they are, in essence, a female version of the salaryman, they are never called “salarywomen.” Rather, the approved term for this new breed of female is *kyaria ūman* (キャリアウーマン)—that is, “career woman.”

Naturally, the popular forms of entertainment are reflecting this trend. In the TV “trendy-dramas”—weekly serials that appeal to young professionals—such popular stars as Yamaguchi Tomoko, Koizumi Kyōko, and Ishida Hikari are now routinely cast as corporate section chiefs, restaurant managers, copywriters, lawyers, etc. Trendy manga have taken up the cause as well.

• cranks out = 機械的に作り出す *kikai-teki ni tsukuridasu* / 機械的に執筆する *kikai-teki ni shippitsu suru* • filthy = 卑猥な *hiwai na* / 下品な *gehin na*

On a visit to a client,
super-banker Harashima
Hiromi introduces her
companion: "I've brought
the mastermind behind
the coup d'état."



© Shū and Yumeno / Kono Hito ni Kakeru, Kodansha

Japan's famous uniformed Office Ladies, or OLs, have long been featured in business manga—as in the comic strip *OL Shinkaron*, familiar to *Mangajin* readers. There are also manga dealing with female secretaries. The best of the lot, to me, is "*Jūyaku Hisho Rina*" (重役秘書リナ), or "Rina—the Director's Private Secretary," written by Imano Izumi. In this series, Narita Rina, secretary to a senior director at the Marunouchi Bank, takes it on herself to solve various business crises confronting her boss. Rina's strategies are invariably ingenious and successful, but she always sees to it that her boss gets the credit.

In the career-woman manga, in contrast, the woman is often the boss. A good example is the popular "*O-shigoto Desu!*" (お仕事です!), by the famous manga artist Saimon Fumi. This series, which bears the English subtitle "Women's Company," covers the travails and triumphs of three women who have left their jobs to start a business of their own. Their company, called Little Bird, consists of a retail kitchen-goods outlet and a related restaurant-supply firm.

Over time, the women run into various business crises and opportunities; they also meet their share of sexism. In one recent episode, a man who is making a disturbance in the store is approached by the heroine, Nojima Kotori, who asks him to leave. "Oh yeah? And who might you be?" the man replies. "I'm the *shachō* (president of the company) here," Nojima says calmly. "*Shachō*?" the man spits out. "Aren't you a little girlish to be a *shachō*?"

Other career-woman heroines work for bigger companies. *Mangajin* readers are familiar with Harashima Hiromi, the quietly aggressive and ambitious bank executive who is the central character of the series "*Kono Hito ni Kakeru*" (この女に賭けろ), or "Bet on This Woman," by Shū Ryōka and Yumeno Kazuko. (An excerpt from this story ran in *Mangajin* issues No. 47-55.)

Hiromi, too, faced sex discrimination early in her career at Yotsuba Bank, but recently the tales in "*Kono Hito*" have focused more on her often daring exploits on behalf of the bank and its customers. In the early days of the series, we were worried that Hiromi might lose her job because of animosity from some male officials at the bank. Nowadays, Hiromi is secure in her work—but she is already worrying about a potential "glass ceiling" that could impede her progress to the top ranks of the bank.



© Shū and Yumeno / Kono Hito ni Kakeru, Kodansha

The back cover of a
book collection of
"Kono Hito ni
Kakeru" stories
spells out
Harashima's
mission—in
English.

• ingenious = 巧妙な *kōmyō na* / 独創的な *dokusō-teki na* • kitchen-goods outlet = 台所用品店 *daidokoro yōhin-ten* • glass ceiling = ガラスの天井 *garasu no tenjō* / 職場での少数派 (特に女性) の昇進の行き止まり *shokuba de no shōsū-ha (toku ni josei) no shōshin no ikidomari*

For my money, though, the master of the career-woman manga is Oze Akira, the creator of two popular women-in-business series that manage to be informative, provocative, and heart-warming.

In the 1980s, Oze gave us *"Natsuko no Sake"* (夏の酒, "Natsuko's Sake"). This long-running narrative concerned the bright daughter of a saké-brewing family in rural Niigata prefecture. Determined to escape from the sticks when she finished school, Natsuko landed a dream job—as a copywriter in a big Tokyo ad agency (a place that looks a lot like Dentsu, Japan's top advertising firm).

In one of her first assignments, Natsuko is asked to write an ad pushing the products of a giant saké factory in Kobe. The job gives her severe guilt pangs—because she knows saké well, she is aware that her client's product is actually rotgut. In short order, Natsuko quits the ad biz, heads home to Niigata, takes over the family business, and makes it more successful than it has ever been.

I used to love the tale of Natsuko when it was running in *Comic Morning* magazine. For some reason, though, I had trouble getting my friends interested in it; they seemed to think there was too much inside lore about how to brew great saké. This problem ended, though, in 1993, when the TBS network (that's Tokyo Broadcasting, not Turner) made a serialized drama of the story, with the gorgeous Wakui Emi in the title role. Since almost everybody in Japan loves Emi-chan, the whole country turned into fans of *"Natsuko no Sake."*

But by then it was too late. Oze had finished the comic version of *"Natsuko."* He had another series up his sleeve—one that most people agree is even better: *"Minori Densetsu"* (みのり伝説, "The Legend of Minori").

Suginae Minori is a 28-year-old journalist who suddenly becomes, through a blend of desire and necessity, a freelance writer (this term is shortened in Japanese to フリーライター, *furii raitā*). She has countless adventures, meeting sometimes with triumph and sometimes with setbacks, both journalistic and financial. Meanwhile, she has various boyfriends—none terribly serious—and is constantly fending off the approaches of her mother and grandmother, who think Minori had darned well better get married before she turns 30.

The following excerpt comes from the very first chapter of her long-running "legend." Readers may be pleased to know that, in later episodes, Minori

rebounds from her somewhat shaky start here and builds a solid career contributing to major magazines. Her specialty seems to be stories along the lines of "Tokyo's Top 20 . . ."—e.g., the best curry restaurants, the best bottled waters, etc. Oze has fun with these tales, because the "Top 20" type of story in fact appears all the time in the real-life trendy magazines of Tokyo and Osaka.

Socially, things are going great for Minori these days. She recently turned down a marriage proposal from a decent but unexciting guy. The latest episodes of the "legend," as of the end of 1996, have Minori being courted by a famous rock star who has fallen hard for her decency and down-to-earth manner.



The title character of *"Minori Densetsu,"* a freelance writer, finishes an assignment in her home office.

"Minori Densetsu" can stand on its own as an entertaining glimpse into one woman's life. But at the same time, it is a representative sample of the most important new manga genre of the '90s so far: the career-woman manga.

(*"O-shigoto Desu!"* currently appears in the manga magazine *Big Comic Spirits*; *"Kono Hito ni Kakerō"* in *Shūkan Morning*; and *"Minori Densetsu"* in *Big Comic Original*.)

T.R. Reid is a correspondent for the Washington Post. He is currently on leave from the paper, writing a book about Confucian values and making a series of documentary films on Japan for the (American) TBS network.

• the sticks = 片田舎 *kata-inaka* • rotgut = 下等酒 *katōshu* / 質の悪い酒 *shitsu no warui sake* • fend off = かわす *kawasu* • down-to-earth = 足が地についている *ashi ga chi ni tsuite iru*



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1 **Narration:** 三月 前に 腰の抜ける ような 思い で 別れた
 Mitsuki -mae ni koshi no nukeru yō na omoi de wakareta
 3 months ago become paralyzed type thoughts/feelings with parted

男 の 話 は、おいおい するとして、
 otoko no hanashi wa, oi-oi suru to shite,
 man about story as for by and by will do/tell

As for the tale of the man I broke up with three months ago feeling utterly debilitated, I will get to it by and by, but ...

The story of the man with whom I went through a devastating break-up three months ago, I will relate in due course, but ... (PL2)

Sound FX: カッ カッ カッ

Ka! ka! ka!

Click click click (clicking of heels on floor)

- mitsuki = sankagetsu = "3 months"; mae ni after a time span means "[that much time] ago."
- koshi refers to the rear midsection of a person's body, roughly from a little above the waist down through the hips; in many expressions it represents the main support and locus of strength of the body (and, metaphorically, of other objects), similar to "backbone/spine" in English. Nukeru literally means "comes out/slips out," so koshi ga nukeru (here, no replaces ga because it's in a modifying clause) essentially refers to a loss of the body's main support and strength, like being suddenly debilitation due to shock, extreme stress, grief, terror, etc.
- yō na ("type/kind of") makes koshi no nukeru ("[I] become paralyzed") into a modifier for omoi ("thoughts/feelings"): "paralyzing-type feelings."
- wakareta is the plain/abrupt past form of wakareru ("part/separate/break up [with]").
- mitsuki-mae ni koshi no nukeru yō na omoi de wakareta is a complete thought/sentence ("3 months ago [I] broke up with [him] with paralyzing-type feelings") modifying otoko ("man").
- ~ otoko no hanashi = "the story of the man with whom [I did the action]."
- to shite is the -te form of the expression to suru, which often implies "make it ~/make it that ~" in the sense of making a choice/selection/decision—the decision here being that she will defer giving an account of her former boyfriend until later. The sentence continues through the next 2 frames.

2 **Narration:** とにかく、今日、 六月二十日、
 tonikaku, kyō, rokugatsu hatsuka, ...
 at any rate today June 20th

[see next frame]

Sound FX: カッ カッ

Ka! ka!

Click click (clicking of heels on floor)

Interview with Muramatsu Masumi

(continued from page 14)

religious jokes and ethnic jokes are best avoided initially. But after the ice is broken, after some beer or saké and after you become friends, then do share some of your favorites—parochial jokes, ethnic jokes, and occupational jokes. And ah, yes, lawyer jokes and doctor jokes. The Japanese understand these fairly readily. If you are an American lawyer, by all means offer one of your humorous lawyer jokes and the Japanese will be impressed. We'll think you're great because you can laugh at yourself.

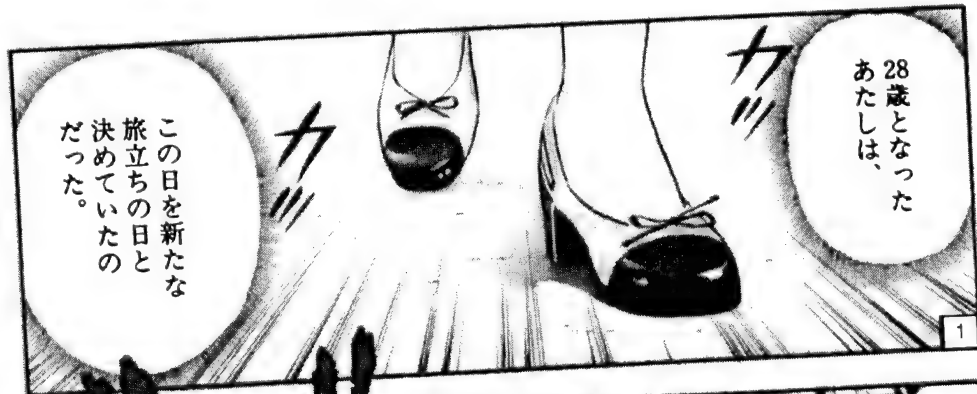
S: One last question. Decades ago R.H. Blyth wrote a wonderful book titled *Oriental Humor*, which had a section on Japan. Today there's a critical need for a new book on Japan. Do you have any plans to write one?

M: I've been saving essays I've written in English, and I'm beginning to transcribe many of my lectures, so I hope to be able to condense them into a book on Japanese humor. Or is Japanese humor really an oxymoron? Ahh, how I love that big word, "oxymoron."

S: Do you think the word might be in the title?

M: Well, why not? Perhaps I'll deliberately misspell it with an "i" instead of an "r."

Frederik L. Schodt's most recent book, *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*, is described on this website:
<http://www.stonebridge.com/dreamland.html>



- 1 **Narration:** 28歳 となったあたしは、この日を新たな旅立ちの日と決めていたのだった。
Nijūhassai to natta atashi wa, kono hi o arata na tabidachi no hi to kimete ita no datta.
 28 yrs. of age to became I/me as for this day (obj.) new/fresh departure of day (quote) had decided (explan.)
 I who became age 28 had decided that this would be the day of a new departure.
at any rate, I had decided that today, June 20th, the day I turned 28, would be the day of a new departure for me. (PL2)

Sound FX: カッ カッ
Ka! ka!
Click click (clicking of heels on floor)

- *-sai* is the counter suffix for years of age.
- *natta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *naru* (“become”) and *to* marks the result, so *nijūhassai to natta* = “became 28,” which modifies *atashi* (a variation of *watashi*, “I/me,” used by female speakers) → “I who became 28.”
- *kimete ita* is the past form of *kimete iru* (“has/have decided”), from *kimeru* (“decide”); *o* marks *kono hi* (“this day”) as the object of her decision—what she is deciding about—and *to* marks *arata na tabidachi no hi* (“a day of new departure”) as the specific content/nature of the decision—what she has decided *kono hi* is.
- *no datta* is the past form of the explanatory *no da*.

- 2 **Editor:** ん?
N?
“Hunh?” (PL2)

- 3 **Sound FX:** バン!!
Ban!!
Bam (effect of slamming envelope down on desk)

Envelope: 辞表
Jihyō
Letter of Resignation

- 4 **Editor:** てへっ
Tehe!
 (self-pitying, embarrassed laugh)
 ハナ血 出ちゃった。ティッシュ ない?
Hanaji dechatta. Tisshu nai?
 nosebleed came out-(regret) tissue not have?
“My nose is bleeding. Got a tissue?” (PL2)

- *dechatta* is a contraction of *dete shimatta*, the *-te* form of *deru* (“come/go out”) and the past form of *shimau*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is/was regrettable/undesirable. *Hanaji ga deru* as a phrase means “get a bloody nose” or “one’s nose bleeds.”
- *tisshu* is from the English word “tissue.”

- 5 **Editor:** そー か、そー か、とうとう みつけた か、みのりくん も!
Sō ka, sō ka, tōtō mitsuketa ka, Minori-kun mo!
 that way (?) that way (?) finally found (?) (name-fam.) also
“Is that right, is that right? You finally found one, too!” (PL2)

- Editor:** そろそろ ギリギリ の 線 だ もん なア。
Sorosoro giri-giri no sen da mon nā.
 by and by/soon barely within limit of line/position is because/so (colloq.)
 おれ も 日々 心配 は してた んだ!!
Ore mo hibi shinpai wa shite-ta n da!!
 I also everyday worry/anxiety as for was doing/having (explan.)
 “You were soon coming to the position of being at the limit, so I, too, worried about it every day.”
“You were coming right down to the wire; not a day went by that it didn’t weigh on my mind.” (PL2)

- Minori:** な、 なんです か、 ギリギリ って?
Na nan desu ka, girigiri tte?
 (stammer) what is (?) barely within limit (quote)
“Wh- what do you mean—‘right down to the wire?’” (PL3)

- *そーか* is an alternate spelling for *そうか* (“is that so?/is that right?”); many manga artists like to use katakana long marks instead of adding hiragana for long vowels.
- *mitsuketa* is the plain/abrupt past form of *mitsukeru* (“find/discover”).
- *-kun*, a more familiar equivalent of *-san* (“Mr./Ms.”), is used mainly with male peers or subordinates, but in a corporate setting superiors use it with subordinates of both sexes.
- *giri-giri* implies being just barely within a limit; and *sen* (lit., “line”) can refer to a “position/level/track”; *giri-giri no sen* = “barely within the limit/right up against the limit.”
- *mon* is a contraction of *mono*, which after *da/desu* means “because it’s ~”; *~ da mon na* = “because it’s ~, isn’t it/ right?” and elongating the *na* gives it a bit of a contemplative/reflecting feeling.
- *shinpai* is a noun for “worry/concern/anxiety,” and *shinpai suru* is its verb form “worry/fret”; *shinpai shite-ta* is a contraction of *shinpai shite ita* (“was worried/anxious”), past form of *shinpai shite iru* (“am worried/anxious”); inserting *wa* adds emphasis.
- *tte* here is a colloquial equivalent of the quotative phrase *to iu no wa* (“as for what you refer to as ~”).



1

Editor: で、式 は いつ?
De, shiki wa itsu?
 so ceremony as for when

"So when's the ceremony?" (PL2)

Minori: そんな じゃありません!! 女 が 会社 を 辞める の は 結婚 以外に
Sonnan ja arimasen!! Onna ga kaisha o yameru no wa kekkon igai ni
 that kind of thing is not woman (subj.) co./job (obj.) quit purpose as for marriage other than
 考えられない んですか、デスク は?
kangaerarenai n desu ka, desuku wa?
 can't think/imagine (explan.-?) man. editor/you as for

"That's not it at all! Is marriage the only reason you can think of for a woman to quit her job?" (PL3)

- *sonnan* = *sonna no* = "a thing like that/that kind of thing," and *ja arimasen* is the PL3 equivalent of *ja nai* ("is not");
- *sonnan ja arimasen* = "it's nothing like that/it's not that at all/that's not it at all."
- *no* is a nominalizer that makes the complete thought/sentence *onna ga kaisha o yameru* ("a woman quits her company/job") act as a single noun, and *wa* marks that noun as the topic (in this case a secondary topic, after *desuku*).
- *kangaerarenai* is the negative form of *kangaerareru* ("can think"), potential form of *kangaeru* ("think").
- *desuku* is from the English "desk"; *desuku* is used in Japanese newspaper and magazine publishing as a word for "managing editor."

2

Editor: 他に なにか ある のか?
Hoka ni nanika aru no ka?
 other something exists (explan.-?)

"Is there something else?" (PL2)

3

Editor: あ、まさか、ひょっとしてあの 晩 のこと?
A, masaka, hyotto shite ano ban no koto?
 (interj.) surely not could it be that night of thing

"Oh, surely it's not... this isn't perchance about that one night, is it?" (PL2)

あ、ありゃ 酔った いきおい で、その、たまたま ホテル街 だった から...
A- arya yotta ikioi de, sono, tama-tama hoteru-gai datta kara...
 (stammer) as for that got drunk impetus/impulse by (interj.) by chance hotel district was because

"Th- that was just a drunken impulse, you know, because we happened to be in a hotel district..." (PL2)

セクハラ とか じゃなくて...
Sekuhara toka ja nakute...
 sexual harassment or something was not-and

"It wasn't sexual harassment or anything..." (PL2)

- *masaka* emphasizes a statement of disbelief/incredulity. For this use, the sentence typically ends in a negative conjecture, *nai darō/deshō*, so that is the ending implied here: *~ ja nai darō* = "surely it's not ~/surely it can't possibly be that ~."
- *hyotto shite* (or *hyotto suru to*) is used to introduce guesses/conjectures with the feeling of, "it just might possibly be that ~"; in a question it becomes "could it possibly be that ~?" He switches in the middle of his sentence from believing it couldn't be to wondering if maybe it could.
- *arya* is a contraction of *are wa* ("as for that").
- *yotta* is the past form of *you* ("become drunk"), modifying *ikioi* ("impetus/impulse") → "drunken impulse."
- *sekuhara* is shortened from *sekushuaru harasumento*, the full katakana rendering of "sexual harassment."

4

Minori: あ...の... ですねえ...
A-...-no... desu nē...
 (interj.) is (colloq.)

"Look, let me explain something to you..." (PL3)

Editor: ちがう の?
Chigau no?
 different (explan.)

"That's not it either?" (PL2)

- *ano nē* (or *ano desu nē* in PL3 speech) are used as warm-up phrases for cautioning or correcting someone when they seem to have jumped to the wrong conclusion: "now look/hold on a minute/slow down/I hate to say this, but..."
- *chigau* literally means "differs/is different," but often implies "is wrong/mistaken" → "that's not it."

5

Sound FX: パチッ
Pachi!

Snap! (sound of snapping fingers)

Editor: わかった! あれ か? ふた月分 の 給料 未払い の 件 か?
Wakatta! Are ka? Futatsuki-bun no kyūryō miharai no ken ka?
 understood that (?) 2 months worth (=) salary unpaid of matter/case (?)

"I know! Is it that? Is it the matter of two months' worth of unpaid salary?"

"That must be it! It's because we fell two months behind on your salary, isn't it?" (PL2)

- *wakatta*, the plain/abrupt past form of *wakaru* ("come to know/understand"), is used idiomatically as an exclamation for "I know!/I've got it!/I've figured it out!"
- *futatsuki* = *nikagetsu* = "2 months," and *-bun* after a quantity means "enough for/equivalent to that much" or "that much worth."

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6

Editor: 銀行 いって見ろ よ。とつくに まとめて 振り込んだって 社長 言ってた ぜ。
Ginkō itte miro yo. Tokku-ni matomete furikonda tte shachō itte-ta ze.
bank try going (emph.) long since combined together transferred (quote) co. pres. was saying (emph.)

“Try going to the bank. The boss was saying he’d long since transferred it all to your account.” (PL2)

- *itte* is the *-te* form of *iku* (“go”), and *miro* is the abrupt command form of *miru* (“see/look at”); a form of *miru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies “try [doing the action] and see [what happens/what the situation is].”
- *matomete* is the *-te* form of *matomeru* (“put together/combine into one”).
- *furikonda* is the past form of *furikomu* (“pay by bank transfer”); *matomete furikonda* = “combined and paid by bank transfer” → “paid the combined amount by bank transfer.”
- *tte* is a colloquial equivalent of the quotative *to*.
- *itte-ta* is a contraction of *itte ita* (“was saying”), past of *itte iru*, from *iu* (“say”).

1

Minori: ちがいます! あたしは フリー に なりたい だけです!!
Chigaimasu! Atashi wa furii ni naritai dake desu!!
is different I/me as for free/freelance to want to become only is

“No! That’s not it either. I just want to go freelance!” (PL3)

Minori: ライター として 独立したい だけです!!
Raitā to shite dokuritsu shitai dake desu!!
writer as want to stand alone/become independent only is

“I just want to strike out on my own as an independent writer!” (PL3)

- *furii* is shortened from *furiiransu*, the katakana rendering of “freelance.”
- *naritai* is the “want to” form of *naru* (“become”); *naritai dake* = “just/only want to become.”
- *raitā* here is the katakana rendering of the English word “writer.”
- *dokuritsu shitai* is the “want to” form of *dokuritsu suru* (“become independent”).

2

Narration: さすがに、 作家 になる と は 言えなかった。
Sasuga ni, sakka ni naru to wa ienakatta.
as would expect author/novelist to will become (quote) as for could not say

Still, I couldn’t bring myself to say I was going to become an author. (PL2)

- *sasuga ni* typically implies that the action fits what you would expect of the person under the circumstances; here she has unexpectedly turned decisive and boldly announced that she’s striking out on her own, but it fits with her underlying timidity that she can’t bring herself to publicly claim the goal of *sakka*.
- perhaps even more than the word “author” in English, *sakka* refers to a composer of literary work.

3

Editor: なんだ、そんな こと か。
Nan da, sonna koto ka.
what is that kind of thing (?)

“Oh, is that all?” (PL2)

Editor: いい ん じゃない、みのりくん。 今月 いっぱい と はいわず、明日 から でも。
Ii n ja nai, Minori-kun. Kongetsu ippai to wa iwazu, ashita kara demo.
good/fine (explan.) is not (name-fam.) this month through end (quote) as for not say tomorrow from even

“It’s fine, Minori, is it not? Instead of saying [you’ll stay] through the end of this month, even from tomorrow [you can be independent].”

“That should be fine, Minori. Why wait until the end of the month? You can start tomorrow.” (PL2)

- *nan da* (literally “what is it?”) at the beginning of a sentence often expresses a feeling of let down. Here it gives the feeling of “Oh, that’s all it is,” overlapping with the meaning of *sonna koto ka* (“is it [only] that kind of thing?”).
- *~ n ja nai* spoken with the intonation of a question is literally like “it’s ~, is it not?” but idiomatically it is equivalent to “it’s probably/surely ~” or “it should be ~.”
- *ippai* after a time word referring to a day/week/month/year makes an expression for “through the end of [the specified day/week/month/year].”
- *iwazu* is equivalent to *iwanaide*, a negative *-te* form of *iu* (“say”) → “instead of/rather than saying.”

4

Minori: は?

Ha?

“Huh?” (PL3)

Editor: なにせ 不況 だもん ね。 人員 整理 できないもん かって、 よく 社長 こぼしてた し。
Nanise fukyō da mon ne. Jin’in seiri dekinai mon ka tte, yoku shachō koboshite-ta shi.
after all recession is because(colloq.) personnel adjustment can’t do thing (?) (quote) frequently co. pres. was grumbling(cause)

“After all, it’s a recession. The boss has been grumbling a lot lately that he wished he could reduce staff.” (PL2)

- *nanise* is a colloquial/dialect variation of *nanishiro*, which can take on a variety of meanings depending on its context: “at any rate/I mean/you know/after all.”
- *jin’in seiri* (“personnel adjustment”) essentially means “staff cuts/layoffs/downsizing.”
- *dekinai* is the negative form of *dekiru* (“can do”), and *mon* is a contraction of *mono* (“thing”), so *dekinai mon ka* is literally “is it a thing that can’t be done?” → “I wonder if it can’t be done?” (implying “I wish it could be done/I wish I could do it”).
- *yoku* is the adverb form of *ii/yoi* (“good/fine”), here meaning “often/frequently” rather than “well.”
- *koboshite-ta* is a contraction of *koboshite ita* (“was complaining/grumbling”), from *kobosu* (“complain/grumble”).
- *shi* marks the preceding as the cause/reason for something—here, the reason he thinks Minori can quit right away.



1

Editor: ま、がんばってよ。出張中の社長にはよく言っとく。

Ma, ganbatte yo. Shutchō -chū no shachō ni wa yoku ittoku.
(interj.) strive hard (emph.) business trip -midst who is co. pres. to as for well will tell/speak
“Well, good luck. I will speak well to the boss who is on a business trip.”

“Well, good luck. I’ll pass the word on to the boss when he gets back from his business trip.” (PL2)

Minori: し、失礼します!

Shi- shitsurei shimasu!
(stammer) rudeness will do
“G- goodbye!” (PL3)

- *ma* (or *mā*) is a verbal “warm-up” word that often has no equivalent in English—though sometimes words like “well/I mean/you know” work as equivalents.
- *ganbatte* is the *-te* form of *ganbaru* (“be dogged/persistent/unflinching” in the face of a challenge). The *-te* form is often used as a cheer in athletic competitions, implying “strive hard/give it your all,” and in much the same manner, the editor is offering Minori encouragement/wishing her good luck in her new challenge.
- the suffix *-chū* means “during/in the midst of,” so *shutchō-chū* = “[in the midst of being] on a business trip.”
- *ittoku* is a contraction of *itte oku* (“will go ahead and tell”), from *iu* (“say/tell”).
- *shitsurei* is literally “rudeness/bad manners,” and *shimasu* is the polite form of *suru* (“do”), so the expression essentially means “I will do/commit a rudeness.” This is a polite way to take one’s leave, like saying “excuse me,” and in many formal/polite contexts it’s the proper way to say “goodbye.”

2

Editor: お〜い、フリーライター。これ「退社」の退の字まちがってるぞー!!

Ōi, furii raitā. Kore “taisha” no tai no ji machigatte-ru zō!
(interj.) freelance writer this taisha in tai for kanji is wrong (emph.)

“Hey, freelance writer! The kanji for *tai* in *taisha* is wrong.” (PL2)

- *furii raitā* is shortened from *furiiransu raitā* (from the English “freelance writer”).
- *taisha* is written with kanji meaning “withdraw” and “company” → “resign [from a company].”
- *machigatte-ru* is a contraction of *machigatte iru* (“is wrong/mistaken”), from *machigaeru* (“make a mistake/goof up”).
- *zo* is a rough, masculine particle for emphasis.

3

Narration: ケチでさえない会社だった。

Kechi de saenai kaisha datta.
worthless is/was-and depressing company was

It was a cheap, depressing company. (PL2)

発行部数 三千部の洋酒業界誌をメインにかりうじて経営していた。

Hakkō-busū sanzenbu no yōshu gyōkai -shi o mein ni karōjite keiei shite ita.
circulation 3,000 count that is/has liquor industry magazine (obj.) main as barely was conducting business

With a liquor industry magazine having a total circulation of 3,000 as its mainstay, it was just barely managing to stay afloat. (PL2)

- when describing people, *kechi* is a noun referring to a lack of generosity, “stinginess/meanness,” but in this case, it has more the meaning of “small/worthless/cheap.”
- *saenai* is the negative form of *saeru* (“be clear/sharp/masterful/successful”) → “be dull/depressing/ineffectual/unsuccessful.”
- *hakkō* = “publication,” and *busū* = “number of copies,” so *hakkō-busū* refers to “number of copies published” → “total circulation.” *-bu* is a counter suffix for copies of a newspaper or magazine.
- *yōshu*, literally “Western/European liquor/wine,” is a generic term for all kinds of alcoholic beverages introduced to Japan from the West, including wine and beer as well as distilled liquors like whiskey, brandy, vodka, gin, etc.
- *karōjite* = “barely/narrowly/with great difficulty.”
- *keiei* is a noun referring to the ownership and management/running of a business, and *keiei shite ita* is the the past form of *keiei shite iru* (“is running a business”), from the verb *keiei suru* (“run a business”); *karōjite keiei shite iru* = “is barely running the business” → “is barely staying afloat.”

4

Narration: あたしはそこで四年もの間、こきつかわれたのだった。

Atashi wa soko de yonen mo no aida, koki-tsukawareta no datta.
I/me as for there at a full 4 years of period was worked hard/exploited (explan.)

I worked like a slave there for a full four years. (PL2)

安月給で企画からルポ、インタビュー記事まで、なんでもやらされてきたのだった。

Yasu-gekkū de kikaku kara rupo, intabyū kiji made, nandemo yarasarete kita no datta.
low/cheap pay at planning from reporting interview articles as far as everything was made to do (explan.)

For next to nothing, I had done everything, from planning to reporting to interviews. (PL2)

- *mo* after a quantity implies that amount is a lot, so *yonen mo* = “all of 4 years/4 entire years”; *no* makes this a modifier for *aida* (“timespan/period”) → “a period of 4 full years.”
- *koki-tsukawareta* is the past form of *koki-tsukawareru*, which is the passive form of *koki-tsukau* (“drive/work [someone] hard”).
- *ru* is shortened from *reportūtāju*, the full Japanese rendering of the French *reportage* (“reporting/reportage”).
- *yarasarete* is the *-te* form of *yarasareru* (“be made to do”), the causative passive form of *yaru* (“do”), and *kita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kuru* (“come”); *kuru* after the *-te* form of a verb often implies movement toward the speaker—here a movement in time from the past up to the present.



1 **Minori:** あの～、これ、ローン 組めます?
Anō, kore, rōn kumemasu?
 (interj.) this loan can assemble/take out
 “Excuse me, can a loan be taken out for this?”
 “Excuse me, can I buy this on credit?” (PL3)

- *anō* is a hesitation word similar to “uhh/um.” It’s often used to get someone’s attention, essentially like “Excuse me.”
- *kumemasu* is the polite form of *kumeru*, which is the potential (“can/be able to”) form of the verb *kumu* (“put together/assemble,” or when speaking of a loan, “take out/draw up”). In this case, *kumemasu*? = *kumemasu ka*?

2 **Salesman:** もちろん! 十回 まで OK! お客さん 目 が 高い。これが 今 一番 売れてる 機種 よ!
Mochiron! Jukkai made ōkē! Okyaku-san me ga takai. Kore ga ima ichiban urete-ru kishu yo!
 of course ten times up to OK (hon.)-customer/you eye (subj.) is high this (subj.) now most is selling model (is-emph.)
 “Of course! You can pay in up to ten installments. You have a discerning eye, Miss. This is the best-selling model right now!” (PL2)

- *-kai* is a counter for “times/opportunities,” and when speaking of loans it refers to the number of times payments will be made → “installments.”
- *me ga takai* (lit., “eye is high”) is an expression for “have discerning judgment/good taste.”
- *urete-ru* is a contraction of *urete iru* (“is selling”), from *ureru* (“[something] sells”); *ima ichiban urete-ru* is a complete thought/sentence (“[it] is selling most now”) modifying *kishu* (“model”) → “it’s the best-selling model right now.”

3 **Minori:** 二千... いえ、三十回 払い になりませんか?
Nijū... ie, sanjukkai -barai ni narimasen?
 20 no 30-installment payments to won’t it become
 “Can’t you make it 20... no, 30 installments?” (PL3)

Salesman: は?
 Ha?
 “Huh?” (PL3)

- *-barai* is from *harai* (*h* changes to *b* for euphony), a noun form of *harau* (“pay”); a number plus *-kai-barai* is the term for stating how many installments a loan must be paid off in.
- *narimasen* is the polite form of *naranai* (“not become”), negative of *naru* (“become”). Spoken as a question it literally means “won’t it become ~?” but here this is actually an indirect way of asking “can’t you make it ~?”
- は? spoken as a question is a polite/formal “huh?/what’s that?/excuse me?”

4 **Minori:** お願い します!!
Onegai shimasu!!
 (hon.)-request do
 “Please!” (PL3)

Salesman: い、 いや、 かし...
I- iya, shikashi...
 (stammer) no/well but
 “W- well, but...”

- *onegai shimasu* is literally a polite “I request it [of you],” often essentially equivalent to “please [do the aforementioned action].”
- *iya* is literally “no,” but can serve merely as a kind of hesitation word, like “well/er/that is.”

5 **Minori:** お願い します! あなた だけが 頼り です!
Onegai shimasu! Anata dake ga tayori desu!
 (hon.)-request do you only/alone (subj.) reliance/hope is/are
 “Please! You’re my only hope!” (PL3)

Minori: あなたのやさしい ひと言 が、歴史 に 残る 女流作家 を 誕生させる かもしれない の よ!!
Anata no yasashii hitokoto ga, rekishi ni nokoru joryū sakka o tanjō saseru kamo shirenai no yo!!
 you ’s kind one word (subj.) history in will remain woman author (obj.) give birth may possibly (explan.) (emph.)
 “One kind word from you could give birth to a woman author whose name will go down in history!” (PL2)

- *tayori* = “reliance”—i.e., the person or thing one is relying upon for some purpose → “hope.”
- *rekishi ni nokoru* (“[she/her name] will remain in history”) modifies *joryū sakka* (“woman author”) → “a woman author who will remain/go down in history.”
- *tanjō* is a noun for “birth,” and *tanjō saseru* is the causative (“cause to be”) form of the verb *tanjō suru* (“be born”); *kamo shirenai* = “might/may possibly,” so *tanjō saseru kamo shirenai* is literally “may possibly cause to be born.”

6 **Narration:** 少ななしの お金 で買った ワープロ は、あたしの 覚悟 の あらわれ だった。
Nakenashi no okane de katta wāpuro wa, atashi no kakugo no araware datta.
 small quantity of money with bought word processor as for my commitment of manifestation/symbol was
 The word processor I bought with what little money I had gave concrete shape to my commitment.
 (PL2)

- *nakenashi no* is used when speaking of one’s meager cash/possessions: “what little ~ one has.”
- *katta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kau* (“buy”); *nakenashi no okane de katta* is a complete thought/sentence (“[I] bought it with what little money I had”) modifying *wāpuro* (“word processor,” shortened from *wādo purosessā*, the full Japanese rendering of the English term). *Wāpuro* in Japanese usually refers to dedicated word-processing equipment with built-in software and a printer rather than to a software application for use on an all-purpose computer.



1 **Narration:** もうあと戻り は しない。一生 この 人 と 添いとげる んだ。
Mō ato-modori wa shinai. Isshō kono hito to soi-togeru n da.
 now backslide as for won't do entire life this person with will live together until death (explan.)
There was no turning back. I would live out the rest of my life with this person. (PL2)

まるで 新妻 のように けなげな 決意 で あたし は 彼 を 手に入れた のだった。
Marude niizuma no yō ni kenage na ketsui de atashi wa kare o te ni ireta no datta.
 just like new bride of like brave decision with I/me as for him/partner (obj.) acquired (explan.)
Just like a new bride, I had bravely taken the plunge and acquired for myself a new partner. (PL2)

FX: すりすり

Suri suri

Nuzzle nuzzle (effect of lovingly nuzzling her cheek against the word processor carton)

- *soi-togeru* means "live together as man and wife until parted by death"; *to* marks the person with whom one will live.
- *marude* introduces a statement of likeness, such as *mitai* or *yō da* ("is like"), giving the meaning "just/exactly like ~."
- Here we have the adverb form, *yō ni*, indicating a like manner → "[do the action] as if I were ~/like ~ would."
- *kare* is actually a pronoun for "he/him," but it is also used colloquially as a common noun meaning "boyfriend," and in this case she is extending it to mean "bridegroom/spouse."
- *te ni ireta* is the past form of *te ni ireru* ("obtain/acquire"; literally "put/take into [one's] hand"). *O* marks *kare* as the direct object of this verb.

2 **Minori:** みすてないで ね、ワープロちゃん!! 二人で 幸せになろう!
Misutenaide ne, Wāpuro-chan!! Futari de shiawase ni narō!
 don't abandon-(request) (colloq.) word processor-(dimin.) together let's become happy
"Please don't abandon me, my little Word Processor. Together we'll be happy." (PL2)

- *misutenaide* is a negative *-te* form of *misuteru* ("abandon/desert/walk out on/leave in the lurch"); the *-te* form of a verb often makes a relatively abrupt request or gentle command, and a negative *-te* form makes it a negative request/command: "(please) don't ~."
- *-chan* is a diminutive equivalent of *-san* ("Mr./Ms.") most typically used with the names of children or among close adult friends. Except among children, adding *-chan* to the names of inanimate things generally has a humorous effect, but here it is essentially an extension of her bridegroom metaphor.
- *shiawase* = "happiness," and *narō* is the volitional ("let's/I shall") form of *naruru* ("become"), so *shiawase ni narō* = "let's become happy."

3 **Landlady:** あら、みのりちゃん、お帰り。
Ara, Minori-chan, okaeri.
 (interj.) (name-dimin.) welcome home
"Hi, Minori. Welcome back." (PL2)

Minori: ただいま、おばさん!
Tadaima, Obasan!
 just now aunt/auntie
 "I've just returned, Obasan!"
"Hi, Obasan!" (PL2)

- *obasan* ("aunt/auntie") can be used to refer to any woman past her mid-twenties or so.

- *ara* is a feminine interjection showing sudden awareness or surprise, "oh! oh my! goodness!"
- *okaeri* is an informal abbreviation of *okaeri nasai*, a relatively gentle command form of the verb *kaeru* ("return home"), so it is literally the command, "Go home/Come home." But with the honorific prefix *o-*, it is the standard greeting given when someone arrives home: "Welcome home/welcome back."
- *tadaima* literally means "right now/just now," but it's the standard greeting used when returning home. It is actually an abbreviation of *tadaima kaerimashita* ("I have just now returned home").

4 **Landlady:** 待ってた の よ、みのりちゃん。おめでとう! ホホ...
Matte-ta no yo, Minori-chan. Omedetō! Ho ho...
 was waiting (explan.) (emph.) (name-dimin.) congratulations (fem. laugh)
"I was waiting for you, Minori. Congratulations! Ha ha..." (PL2)

Minori: え?
E?

"Huh?" (PL2)

- *matte-ta* is a contraction of *matte ita*, past form of *matte iru* ("am/is/are waiting"), from *matsu* ("wait").
- *omedetō* (*gozaimasu*) is a congratulatory phrase/greeting used for a wide variety of joyful/auspicious occasions.

5 **Minori:** よく ご存じ ね、おばさん。ニッパチ だ から あまり めでたくもない けど。
Yoku go-zonji ne, Obasan. Nippachi da kara amari medetaku mo nai kedo.
 (surprise) (hon.)-know (colloq.) aunt/auntie 28 am because very much not particularly joyous but
"How did you know, Obasan? Since I'm 28, it's not really all that joyous, but..." (PL3-4; PL2)

Landlady: なに 言ってん の。
Nani itten no.
 what are saying (explan.-?)
"Oh, nonsense!" (PL2)

- *yoku* at the beginning of a sentence can express surprise/amazement at the action/behavior mentioned; *go-zonji* (*da/desu*) is a PL4 honorific equivalent of *shitte iru* ("know"), so *yoku go-zonji* = "I'm surprised you know" → "how did you know?"
- *nippachi* (from *ni*, 2, and *hachi*, 8; *h* changes to *-pp* for euphony) can refer to the 2nd and 8th months (February and August), which have traditionally been thought of together because they are slow business months, but here she's using it to refer to her age, 28.

(continued on next page)



5 (continued)

- *medetakunai* is the negative form of *medetai* ("joyous/auspicious"; *omedetō* comes from this word); inserting *mo* give emphasis like "not even joyous" or "not at all joyous," but this is tempered by *amari*, which before a negative means "not very much" → "not really all that joyous."
- *itten* is a contraction of *itte iru* ("is/are saying"); *nani itte iru no?* is literally "what are you saying?" but idiomatically it often implies "nonsense/don't be ridiculous."

1 **Landlady:** 28 だって バチ は あたらない わ よ。 なおさら めでたい じゃない の。
Nijūhachi datte bachi wa ataranai wa yo. Naosara medetai ja nai no.
 28 even if you are punishment as for won't hit (fem. colloq.) (emph.) all the more joyous is not (explan.)
"There's no punishment for being 28. In fact, it makes it all the more joyous." (PL2)

- *datte* is used as a colloquial equivalent of *mo* ("even/too/also") or *de mo* ("even if he/she/it is" or "even if we/you/they are")—here the latter.
- *bachi* is "divine punishment"; *bachi (ga) ataru* (lit., "punishment hits [you]") means "be punished" or "get what you deserve," and *bachi (wa) ataranai* is the expression's negative form.
- *ja nai no* literally asks "isn't it the case that ~?"; but it's a purely rhetorical question that is actually a fairly strong assertion.
- Minori meant it wasn't particularly joyous to be gaining her independence at the ripe age of 28. The landlady thinks Minori's getting married, and that Minori is saying it's not particularly joyous to get married at that age, which is three years past the traditional "deadline" for young women to get married in Japan. So she contradicts Minori, essentially implying that it is especially joyous when an unmarried woman so far past the ideal age is still able to get married. Unmarried women past the age of 25 have long been compared to unsold Christmas cakes after the 25th of December—implying they are of little value and hard to sell in the marriage marketplace. But the actual average age for a woman's first marriage in Japan has apparently been rising in recent years and is now over 26.

2 **Landlady:** はい! 宅急便。
Hai! Takkyūbin.
 here delivered package
"Here! This was delivered today." (PL2)

Sound FX: ドス
Dosu!
Thump

Minori: うぷっ
Upu!
"Oof"

- *takkyūbin* is a generic term for "package delivery service" and it can also be used to refer to the package that is delivered.

3 **Landlady:** 杉苗 フサ って みのりちゃんのお母さん でしょ?
Suginae Fusa itte Minori-chan no okāsan desho?
 (surname) (given name) (quote) (name-dimin.) 's mother is, isn't she/right?
"Suginae Fusa is your mother, right?" (PL2-3)

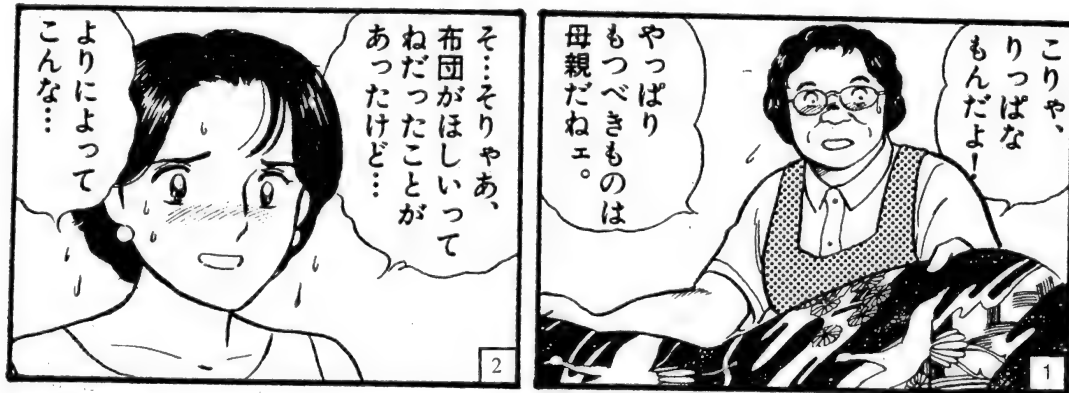
Landlady: 早々と 来た わ よ、 婚礼 家具 第一号!!
Sōsō to kita wa yo, konrei kagu dai-ichigō!
 quickly/without delay came (fem. colloq.) (emph.) wedding furniture No. 1
"It's already arrived—the first item of wedding furniture!" (PL2)

- *ite* here is a colloquial equivalent of the quotative phrase *to iu no wa* ("as for the one called ~").
- *desho* (or *deshō*) literally makes a conjecture ("probably/surely is"), or with a rising intonation, a conjectural question. Often it's a purely rhetorical question that expects the listener to confirm the conjecture: "isn't it so?/right?"
- *sōsō* to basically implies that the action takes place "as soon as [something] begins/occurs" → "early/quickly/without delay";
- *kita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kuru* ("come"), so *sōsō to kita* here implies "[it] came as soon as the plans were made."
- 第 *dai* before a number is like "No. ~." The counter suffix *-gō* is also most typically equivalent to "No."

4 **Minori:** 婚...
Kon—
"Wed—"

5 **Landlady:** どひゃあ!!
Dohyā!
 (exclam.)
"Goodness gracious!!!" (PL2)

- the bundle contained a complete set of *futon* bedding; the futon cover prominently featuring cranes, a symbol of longevity and good luck, makes it very obviously a wedding set. A typical futon set includes two heavy cotton *shikibuton* ("under-futon" → "mattress"; in combinations, *f* changes to *b* for euphony) and one lighter *kakebuton* ("over-futon" → "quilt").



1 **Landlady:** こりゃ、りっぱな もん だよ! やっぱり もつべき もの は 母親 だねエ。
Korya, rippa na mon da yo! Yappari motsu-beki mono wa haha-oya da nē.
 as for this fine thing/merchandise is (emph.) after all should have/possess thing as for mother is (colloq.)
"This is a top-quality futon. Yes indeed, one thing no one should be without is a mother." (PL2)

- beki* after a verb can variously mean "can/should/must"; *motsu-beki* = "should have/possess," and *motsu-beki mono* is literally "a should-possess thing" → "something you should possess/something you shouldn't be without."

2 **Minori:** そ、 そりゃあ、布団 が ほしいって ねだった こと が あった けど、 よりによって、 こんな...
So- soryā, futon ga hoshii tte nedatta koto ga atta kedo, yori ni yotte, konna...
 (stammer) as for that futon (obj.) want (quote) wheedled thing/situation (subj.) existed but of all things this kind of
"I- it's true that I once told her I wanted a new futon, but of all things, [she sends a futon set] like this?"
 (PL2)

- sorya* (or *soryā*) is a contraction of *sore wa*, "as for that"; it's sometimes used like this as a "warm up" phrase with the idiomatic meaning of "of course/it's true that/it goes without saying that."
- nedatta* is the past form of *nedaru* ("ask/beg/wheedle"). *Tte*, a colloquial equivalent of the quotative *to*, marks the specific content of the request, so *futon ga hoshii tte nedatta* is literally "I asked/begged her, 'I want a futon.'" → "I told her I wanted a futon."
- koto ga atta* is the past form of *koto ga aru*, which after the past form of a verb implies "[I/someone] once [did the action]" → "I once told her I wanted a new futon."

3 **Landlady:** あたしも ねエ、みのりちゃん が いかず後家 になる ん じゃないかと
Atashi mo nē, Minori-chan ga ikazu-goke ni naru n ja nai ka to
 I also (colloq.) (name-dimin.) (subj.) unmarried widow/old maid will become (explan.) is it not? (quote)
 陰ながら 心配してた んだ よ。
kage-nagara shinpai shite-ta n da yo.
 secretly was worried (explan.) (emph.)
"I had secretly been worrying, you know, that you might wind up as an old maid." (PL2)

だって、 あんた、 30 越えたら いけず後家 よオ。
Datte, anta, sanjū koetara ikezu-goke yō.
 after all/I mean you 30 if surpass unmarriageable widow/old maid (emph.)

"After all, Minori dear, once you pass thirty you're an old maid for good." (PL2)

- ikazu* is equivalent to *ikanai*, the negative form of *iku* ("go"), and *goke* = "widow"; *ikazu-goke* literally implies "a woman who became a widow without ever getting to be a bride."
- shinpai shite-ta* is a contraction of *shinpai shite ita* ("was worried/had been worrying"), from the verb *shinpai suru* ("worry"); ~ *n ja nai ka to shinpai suru* = "worry whether it/I/you might not ~" → "worry that it/I/you might ~."
- koetara* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *koeru* ("surpass"); *sanjū koetara* = "when/once you pass 30."
- ikezu* is equivalent to *ikenai*, the negative of the potential verb *ikeru* ("can go"), so *ikezu-goke* implies "a woman who becomes a widow because she can't get married"—i.e., a woman destined to remain unmarried forever.

4 **Landlady:** でも さ、これでおばさんも ひと安心 だ。ツルカメ、 ツルカメ!
Demo sa, kore de Obasan mo hito-anshin da. Tsurukame, tsurukame!
 but (colloq.) this with auntie/I also brief relief is crane&tortoise crane&tortoise
"But you know, with this, I can heave a sigh of relief. Knock on wood, knock on wood!" (PL2)

FX: ほろり
Horori
 (tears of joy falling)

- tsuru* = "crane," and *kame* = "tortoise," both of which are considered symbols of longevity and good luck; *tsurukame tsurukame* is used as a formula/chant to ward off bad luck.

5 **Minori:** な、 なに が ツルカメ よ、 おばさん! カンちがい しなide よ!!
Na- nani ga tsurukame yo, Obasan! Kanchigai shinaide yo!
 (stammer) what (subj.) crane&tortoise (is-emph.) aunt/auntie misunderstanding don't do-(request) (emph.)
"Knock on wood my foot! Don't jump to conclusions, Obasan!" (PL1-2)

- nani ga ~ yo* (*nani ga ~ da* for males), where the blank is filled with something the other person said, strongly takes issue with the statement: "What kind of nonsense is ~?/What do you mean by ~?/~ my foot!"

6 **Minori:** あたし 結婚 なんて しない わ! 会社 辞めた の! 独立した の よ!
Atashi kekkon nante shinai wa! Kaisha yameta no! Dokuritsu shita no yo!
 I/me marriage a thing like won't do (fem. colloq.) co./job quit (explan.) went independent (explan.) (emph.)
"I'm not getting married! I just quit my job! I've struck out on my own!" (PL2)

- nante* can be considered a colloquial equivalent of *nado* ("a thing like"), or of an entire phrase like *nado to iu koto/mono wa* (literally, "something that is a thing like ~"). It's often used to belittle the preceding as trivial/out of the question/unthinkable."
- yameta* is the past form of *yameru* ("stop/quit"), which when written with this kanji specifically means "quit work/resign from office." *Dokuritsu shita* is the past form of *dokuritsu suru* ("become independent").

To be continued...

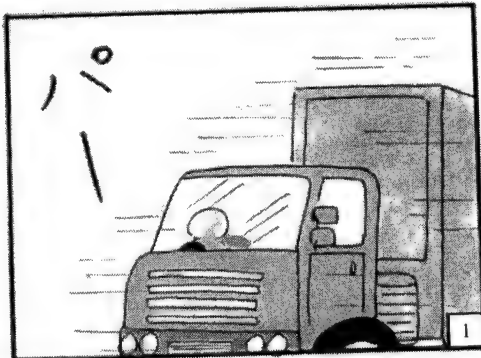
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Yarikuri Company

by はしもといわお • Hashimoto Iwao

俳句旅行



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Title: 俳句 旅行
Haiku Ryokō
Haiku Journey

- *haiku ryokō* conjures the image of a trip taken for the purpose of writing haiku (a three-line poem with lines of 5, 7 and 5 syllables) at the various places along the way—especially places that are already famous.

1 Sound FX: パー
Pā
Ho-onk (sound of horn)

2 Sound FX: ガー
Gā
Roar (sound of truck engine)

3 Yarikuri: これ が 本当の ヒツチ俳句... なんちゃって。
Kore ga hontō no hitchi haiku... Nanchatte.
this (subj.) true hitch haiku/hitchhike just kidding
“Now this is true hitchhaikuing... Just kidding.”
(PL2)

Driver: 歩け よ。
Aruke yo.
walk (emph.)
“Walk.”

“Get out and walk.” (PL2)

- *hontō* is a noun for “truth,” and since *no* makes nouns into modifiers, *hontō no* = “true ~.”
- the Japanese rendering of “hitchhike/hitchhiking” is ヒツチハイク *hitchi haiku*, and that allows the pun with *haiku* (the poem).
- *nanchatte* comes from *nante itte shimatte*, in which *nante* (a colloquial *nado to*) implies the preceding statement is ridiculous/silly/unbelievable, and *itte shimatte* is the *-te* form of *itte shimau* (*iu*, “say” + *shimau* indicating an unintended/regrettable action). A speaker may tack this expression onto something he has said, as a way of saying he’s not really serious/just kidding; or a listener may respond with this expression to imply disbelief.
- *aruke* is the abrupt command form of *aruku* (“walk”); *yo* is often used to emphasize commands.



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Title: くもの巣
Kumo no Su
Spider's Web

- *su* refers to any kind of animal's home, "nest/den/lair/web."

1 **FX:** ヒラ ヒラ
Hira hira
Flutter flutter (effect of butterfly flying)
• *hira hira* represents the effect of something light, thin, and soft fluttering/swaying/falling gently.

2 **FX:** バタ バタ
Bata bata
Flap flap (effect of butterfly flapping desperately)

Yarikuri: あーあ、クモの糸にからまっちゃって。
Ā-a, kumo no ito ni karamatchatte.
(interj.) spider's threads in became entangled-(regret)
"Oh no, it got caught in a spider's web."
(PL2)

バカな ちょうちょ。
Baka na chōcho.
foolish butterfly
"Dumb butterfly." (PL1)

- *ā-a* is a sigh/interjection of disappointment or lament, like "oh well/oh no/too bad/what a shame."
- *ito* = "thread," so *kumo no ito* is literally "spider's thread(s)."
- *karamatchatte* is a contraction of *karamatte shimatte*, from *kamaru* ("become entangled") and *shimau*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is/was regrettable/undesirable.
- *chōchō* ("butterfly") is often shortened to *chōcho* in colloquial speech.

3 **Yarikuri:** わっ!
Wa!
(exclam.)
"Yikes!"
FX: グラ グラ
Gura gura
Wobble wobble (effect of moving in an unstable way)

4 **FX:** ジタ バタ ジタ バタ
Jita bata jita bata
Wriggle flap wriggle flap

Man: 人のことは言えん だろ。
Hito no koto wa ien daro.
person about thing as for can't say surely/probably
"Surely you can't speak about other people."
"You shouldn't be talking about others."
(PL2)

- *jitabata* represents flapping one's arms and legs about and/or wriggling and writhing to try to escape from something/someone—i.e., a desperate struggle to regain control or freedom.
- *ien* is a contraction of *ienai* ("can't say/speak"), negative of *ieru*, which is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *iu* ("say").
- *daro* is a shortened *darō*, which makes a conjecture ("surely/probably"), but in this case it's a strongly assertive conjecture.

BASIC JAPANESE through comics

Lesson 62 • A Laughing Matter

It's been said that laughter is a universal language and in fact, many of the written representations of laughs are the same in English and Japanese. For example, "ha ha ha" and "heh heh" have much the same meaning in both languages. There are, however, some significant differences—such as "ho ho ho," which is a refined feminine laugh in Japan, rather than a jolly-old-elf laugh.

The Japanese also have some interesting habits that accompany laughing, such as covering their mouths or putting their hands behind their heads. These gestures bring other shades of meaning to laughter.

Many sayings involve laughter as well: *warai o kau* (笑いをかう, lit., "to buy laughter") means to incur laughter or be laughed at. If you can avoid that, you might be in a position to say *warai ga tomaranai* (笑いが止まらない, "the laughs don't stop"), meaning that everything is going A-OK. When this phrase modifies a noun, it basically means "fantastic," as in *warai ga tomaranai shōbai*, "fantastic business." This might have you laughing all the way to the bank, and in no time *namida ga deru hodo warau* (涙が出るほど笑う, "laugh until tears come out" → you'll "laugh until you cry").

The generic ha ha ha

The customers at the traditional *kappō* (fine Japanese cuisine) restaurant Fujimura are having a merry time. As evidenced by the bottles behind the counter, drinking is an integral part of the dining experience in establishments such as this.



© Abe & Kurata / Aji Ichi Monme, Shogakukan

Customers: ハハハ ハハハ
Ha ha ha ha ha ha
 (laugh)
"Ha ha ha ha ha ha"
 ワハハハ
wa ha ha ha
 (laugh)
"A ha ha ha"

The basic *ha ha ha* is probably the most common of laughs used to show amusement. Starting out with *wa* or *a* is a common variation. Adding a small *tsu* between the *ha* sounds represents a heartier laugh.

The unrestrained *kya ha ha*

Minikeru, son of feline manga star Michael, was caught in the undignified act of rolling around on his back. He is now attempting to sneak off unobtrusively.



© Kobayashi Makoto / What's Michael?, Kodansha

Women: キヤハハハハハハハ!

Kya ha ha ha ha ha ha!
(laugh)

こっそり 逃げてく わ よー!
Kossori nigete-ku wa yō!

quietly/sneakily is running off (fem.) (emph.)

"Kya-hah hah hah hah! He's sneaking away!" (PL2)

- *nigete-ku* is a colloquial contraction of *nigete iku*, the *-te* form of *nigeru* ("run") plus *iku* ("go") → "run-and-go" → "run away".

Kya is used to represent a shriek or scream, so *kya ha ha* (or sometimes *gya ha ha*, especially for males) represents an unrestrained/boisterous laugh.

An embarrassed *ha ha*

The beautiful Yamabuki-sensei pays an unexpected visit to Dr. Slump. After hurriedly changing into his finest suit, Dr. Slump tries to be a proper host.



© Toriyama Akira / Dr. Slump, Shueisha

Dr. Slump: ははっ。な にか めしあがりますか?
Ha ha! Na- nanika meshi-agarimasu ka?

(laugh) (stammer) something eat (?)

"Ha ha. W- would you like something to eat?" (PL4)

- *meshi-agarimasu*, from *meshi-agaru*, is a very polite honorific verb for "eat."

The pose and the expression on Dr. Slump's face make it clear that in this case *ha ha!* is an embarrassed, uneasy laugh. Another common gesture to show embarrassment is putting the hand behind the head while laughing.

Ho ho ho—A refined, ladylike laugh

Kyōko has been given the role of Okiku, a character in the well-known ghost story “Banchō Sara Yashiki,” in the local shrine’s annual “Test of Courage” fair—essentially a giant outdoor haunted house. With the help of Obasan, she dresses up in an elaborate kimono and turns from a regular teen into a sophisticated noblewoman.



© Takahashi Rumiko / Mezon Ikkoku, Shogakukan

Ho ho ho in Japanese represents a refined and demure feminine laugh, nothing like the boisterous, Santa-Claus-like laugh those syllables usually denote for English speakers. When laughing in this way, the hand usually covers the mouth to further demonstrate modesty.

Mitaka: 皿屋敷 の「お菊さん」ですか?
Sara Yashiki no “Okiku-san” desu ka?
(story title) off/from (name-hon.) are (?)
“Are you Okiku, from Sara Yashiki?” (PL3)

Kyōko: ほほほ。お恥ずかしいー。
Ho ho ho. O-hazukashii.
(laugh) (hon.)-embarrassed
“Tee hee hee, I’m so embarrassed.” (PL2-3)

Obasan: なんとなく なりきってる。
Nantonaku narikitte-ru.
somehow has become completely
“Somehow she’s completely become the part.”
(PL2)

- in spite of the honorific prefix *o-*, *o-hazukashii* implies that the speaker herself is feeling embarrassment.
- *narikitte-ru* is a contraction of *narikitte iru*, from the verb *narikiru* (“become completely/through and through”), a combination of *naru* (“become”) and *kiru* (“completely/thoroughly”).

Fu fu fu—A light, muted laugh

This woman has already started her summer vacation, but her husband is still working. As he leaves for work in the morning, he says the customary *Itte kimasu* (“I’m going”) and she bids him *Itterasshai* (“goodbye/take care”)—a rite they’re probably too rushed for when she has to work, too.



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Woman: うふふ... なんだか 専業 主婦 みたい。
U fu fu... *nandaka sengyō shufu mitai.*
(laugh) for some reason professional housewife am like
“Tee hee hee... for some reason I feel like a full-time housewife.” (PL2)

- *nandaka* is used idiomatically as a softener: “somehow/sort of/ vaguely/for some reason...”
- *~ mitai (da/desu)* means “that’s what [the thing/person] is like”; “that’s the way [the thing/person] seems or feels.”

U fu fu and *fu fu fu* are common laughs for women. They are light, amused laughs for contexts such as the one here. Again, women tend to cover their mouths when laughing in this way.

A sinister fu fu fu

This man's wife claims that she cannot get up to serve her husband tea or answer the phone while their cat is comfortably sleeping on her lap. After a day of using such excuses, the wife needs her husband to get something out of a high cupboard, but now it is the husband's turn to use the rule of "cat-nondisplacement."



© Kobayashi Makoto / What's Michael?, Kodansha

Man: フフフ
Fu fu fu
(laugh)
"Heh heh heh"

In contexts such as this one where the subject is clearly up to no good, *fu fu fu* takes on a sinister, conspiratorial edge. This is most often the case when males are shown using this laugh, though females can use it this way as well.

A smug hi hi hi

Tanaka-kun often slips away to the pachinko parlor during work hours, and today he has had unusually good luck. He is very pleased with himself as he leaves with his winnings.

Tanaka: ウッヒッヒッヒ
U! hi! hi! hi
(laugh)
"Eheh heh heh"

Sign & bag: パチンコ
Pachinko
Pachinko

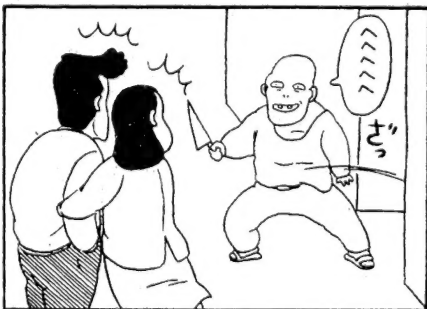


© Tanaka Hiroshi / Naku na! Tanaka-kun, Take Shobo

U hi hi, u shi shi, or just hi hi hi—with or without the small ツ added for emphasis—is a gleefully evil or smug laugh that signals the speaker is or has been up to no good.

An evil he he he

When this man pops out of the shadows, he is hoping to scare the couple, but in the perverse humor of this strip they are actually delighted to see the 通り魔 (*tōrima*, a person who practices random acts of violence on passers-by)—even asking if they might take a picture with him.



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Man: へへへへへ
He he he he he
(laugh)
"Heh heh heh heh heh"

FX: さっ
Za!
(effect of man jumping out)

He he he is a common way to show evil or vulgar thoughts/intentions. This evil *he he he* is mostly masculine.

A sheepish he he he

A goldfish peddler by trade, this woman has just started living with a man she first knew as a customer at her booth. Though she has known him for quite some time, she still calls him *Ojisan* ("Uncle/Mister"). She is apparently more comfortable with goldfish than with broiled fish.



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Woman: おじさん、また 魚 焦がしちゃった よ!!
Ojisan, mata sakana kogashichatta yo!
 Uncle/Mister again fish scorched-(regret) (emph.)
 私、料理 全然駄目 なのよ ね、へへへへ。
Watashi, ryōri zenzen dame na no yo ne, he he he he.
 I/me cooking no good at all (explan.) (emph.) (colloq.) (laugh)
"Ojisan, I burned the fish again! I'm just no good at cooking, am I?"
Ha ha ha ha." (PL2)

- *kogashichatta* is a contraction of *kogashite shimatta*, from *kogasu* ("scorch/burn") and *shimau* ("finish/end"). *Shimatta* after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action was regrettable or undesirable.
- *zenzen* followed by a negative means "not at all."

He he he (or *e he he*) in contexts such as this one is a sheepish, embarrassed laugh. Often the speaker's hand will go behind his or her head to further demonstrate consternation (and sometimes, in extreme cases, the tongue even gets stuck out).

A grandfatherly ka! ka! ka!

Ibashi met a wise old man who promised to show him *real* vegetarian cooking. The man instructed Ibashi to collect young *kaki* ("persimmon") leaves and roast them on an outdoor grill with a bit of salt. They are now enjoying the results of his labors.



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Ibashi: 若葉 を 肴 に 酒 を 飲む...
Wakaba o sakana ni sake o nomu...
 young/fresh leaves (obj.) snack making saké (obj.) drink
 いやー、いい! 実に いい!!
Iyā, ii! Jitsu ni ii!!
 (interj.) good/fine truly good/fine
 "Making young leaves our snack, we drink saké... man, this is great! Really great!"
"Drinking saké with fresh leaves as our snack..."
Man! It doesn't get any better than this!" (PL2)

Old man: カッカッカッカッ
Ka! ka! ka! ka! ka!
 (laugh)

- *sakana* written with this kanji refers to snacks or appetizers nibbled on while drinking saké or other alcoholic beverages.
- *ni* here is equivalent to *ni shite* ("making it [into]"), the *-te* form of *ni suru* ("make it [into]") → "making young leaves our snack..."

Ka! ka! ka! can be described as a cackle but is used mainly by older men.

Ku ku ku—A stifled laugh

This scientist has discovered a planet filled with animals that seem to derive from the same genes as earthlings. Thinking about how this evidence will prove his theories, he begins to savor his success.



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Scientist: ククク ...
Ku ku ku ...
(stifled chuckle)

Ku ku ku represents a quiet laugh/chuckle, stifled at the back of the throat.

Kusu kusu—A giggle

Dr. Slump is desperately hoping that Yamabuki-sensei will laugh at the joke he just told. Belatedly, she reacts.

Yamabuki: クスッ
Kusu!
(effect of giggle)

Kusu! or *kusu kusu* represents a stifled laugh/giggle/snigger that's mostly through the nose. It's associated more with women than men, but not exclusively so.



© Toriyama Akira / Dr. Slump, Shueisha

Gera gera—A horselaugh

Tora-san comes upon his sister Sakura flirting with a group of young men.



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Sakura: やだあ。
Yā dā.
(exclam.)
“Stop it!” (PL2)

Men: ゲラゲラ
Gera gera
(effect of laughs)

- *yā dā* is an exclamatory form of *iya da*, literally meaning “is disagreeable/unpleasant.” As an exclamation, *iya da* often means “Don’t!/Stop it!”

Gera gera represents a horselaugh or guffaw, while the similar *kera kera* is more of a meanish cackle. Most laughing effects require the quotative *to* when connecting to *warau* (*ku ku ku to warau*, “laugh with a *ku ku ku*”), but *kusu kusu* and *gera gera* do not (*gera gera warau*, “laugh with a *gera gera*”).



vocabulary summary

From Akuma no Shushi, p. 17

気になる	ki ni naru	be bothered about
伝説	densetsu	legend
何度も	nando mo	repeatedly
恐ろしい	osoroshii	scary
秘密	himitsu	secret
与える	ataeru	give/bestow
豊富な	hōfu na	bountiful
穀物	kokumotsu	grain
繁栄	han'ei	prosperity
極める	kiwameru	maximize
滅びる	horobiru	falls to ruin/is overthrown
調べる	shiraberu	investigate/inquire into
戦い	tatakai	battle/war
どうやら	dōyara	apparently
熾烈な	shiretsu na	hot/bitter
連中	renchū	people
馬鹿ばかしい	bakabakashii	ridiculous
災厄	saiyaku	calamity
生産	seisan	production
輸出する	yushutsu suru	export (v.)
争う	arasou	compete/vie
購入する	kōnyū suru	purchase (v.)
發育する	hatsuiku suru	grow
工夫する	kufū suru	contrive/fashion
農家	nōka	farmer
越える	koeru	surpass
計算	keisan	calculation
どんどん	don-don	rapidly
物資	busshi	commodity
手を打つ	te o utsu	take necessary action
相談	sōdan	consultation
応じる	ōjiru	respond
増える	fueru	increase (v.)
開発	kaihatsu	development
功績	kōseki	achievement
支える	sasaeru	support (v.)
非常に	hijō ni	extremely
危険	kiken	dangerous
例	rei	example
被害	higai	damage (n.)
甚大な	jindai na	serious/enormous
まさしく	masashiku	certainly/without a doubt
単なる	tannaru	mere/simple
謎	nazo	mysteries/enigmas
起因	kiin	original cause
くやしい	kuyashii	be vexed/chagrined
決別する	ketsubetsu suru	part ways/break with
天才	gensai	genius
導き	michibiki	guidance
異変	ihen	mishap/unusual event
枯死する	koshi suru	wither and die
不明	fumei	unclear/unknown

From Our Tono-sama, p. 42

空	sora	sky
飛ぶ	tobu	fly (v.)
とっくに	tokku ni	long since
おりる	oriru	come down/land

From App-Install, p. 44

タイヤ	taiya	tire (n.)
アーモンド	āmondo	almond
子孫	shison	descendants
娘	musume	daughter/girl
お墓	o-haka	grave (n.)

From Minori Densetsu, p. 66

おいおい	oioi	by and by
とにかく	tonikaku	at any rate
新たな	arata na	new/fresh
旅立ち	tabidachi	departure
ハナ血	hanaji	nosebleed
とうとう	tōtō	finally
そろそろ	sorosoro	by and by/soon
ギリギリ	girigiri	barely within a limit
線	sen	line/position
心配	shinpai	worry/concern/anxiety
式	shiki	ceremony
酔う	you	become drunk
たまたま	tama-tama	by chance
セクハラ	sekuhara	sexual harassment
給料	kyūryō	salary
未払い	miharai	non-payment
銀行	ginkō	bank
まとめる	matomeru	combine together
振り込む	furikomu	pay by bank transfer
独立する	dokuritsu suru	become independent
さすがに	sasuga ni	as one would expect
作家	sakka	author (n.)
なにせ	nanise	after all
不況	fukyō	recession
整理	seiri	adjustment
こぼす	kobosu	complain/grumble
出張	shutchō	business trip
ケチ	kechi	cheap/worthless
発行部数	hakkō-busū	[publication] circulation
洋酒	yōshu	liquor
かろうじて	karōjite	barely/narrowly
経営する	keiei suru	run a business
こきつかう	koki-tsukau	work [someone] hard
安月給	yasu-gekkyū	low/cheap pay
企画	kikaku	planning/plan
記事	kiji	article
組める	kumeru	can assemble/put together
機種	kishu	[appliance] model
頼り	tayori	reliance/hope
歴史	rekishi	history
誕生する	tanjō suru	be born
覚悟	kakugo	commitment
あと戻り	atomodori	backsliding
決意	ketsui	decision
手に入れる	te ni ireru	obtain/acquire
みすてる	misuteru	abandon/desert
めでたい	medetai	joyous
宅急便	takkyūbin	delivered package
早々と	sōsō to	quickly/without delay
りっぱな	rippa na	fine
いかず後家	ikazu-goke	old maid

The Vocabulary Summary is taken from material appearing in this issue of Mangajin. It's not always possible to give the complete range of meanings for a word in this limited space, so our "definitions" are based on the usage of the word in a particular story.